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New York

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman: As I mentioned last Thursday, in accordance with the programme of work and timetable, the Committee will begin today the second phase of its work: the thematic discussion on item subjects, as well as the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and related international security agenda items.

I would like to reiterate that during this stage of work, a certain degree of flexibility shall be maintained, as in previous sessions of the Committee. In accordance with the decisions taken concerning the rationalization of the work of the First Committee, this next stage of the Committee's work will combine the discussion of specific subjects and the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions.

Delegates may recall that document A/C.1/57/CPR.2, containing subjects for the thematic discussions, was circulated during the previous meeting.

Let me, on behalf of myself, the bureau and, indeed, the Committee, express our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia for the tragedy that occurred.

We shall now commence the thematic discussion.

Mr. Guerreiro (Brazil): Allow my delegation to join in the feelings of grief for the events in Indonesia. I would like to convey of Indonesia the sincere condolences of the Brazilian delegation.

Delegates will recall that by its resolution 55/33A of 20 November 2000, entitled "Missiles", the General Assembly requested of the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a panel of governmental experts to be established on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, to prepare a report for the consideration of the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the issue of missiles in all its aspects.

It is my pleasure and honour today to introduce the results of the Panel of Governmental Experts on the issue of missiles in all its aspects, which I had the honour and privilege to chair. The report of the Panel, which is contained in document A/57/229, constitutes the first effort by the United Nations to address the issue of missiles in all its aspects.

In his foreword to the report, the Secretary-General pointed out that

> "The international community has long been concerned by the accumulation, proliferation, technical refinement and threat and use of ballistic and other types of missiles. In response, States have pursued various unilateral, bilateral or multilateral measures. Nonetheless, there is no universally accepted norm or instrument specifically governing the development, testing,

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production, acquisition, transfer, deployment or use of missiles."

The Panel's work was conducted over a period of nearly two years. It was certainly not an easy task. The experts faced the challenge without losing sight of the prevailing political circumstances in which the exercise took place and took into account the wide diversity of views and concerns with respect to analyzing a multifaceted and complex subject and of providing useful conclusions. The Panel discussed the issue of missiles in a comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory manner as a contribution to international peace and security.

I would like to highlight briefly some of the most important findings of our work. All experts agreed that the issues related to missiles have a serious bearing on international peace and security. There are concerns of both a regional and a global order. They are, inter alia, related to the increasing number of missiles, their ranges, technological sophistication and geographical distribution, as well as their capacity to deliver weapons of mass destruction, in particular, nuclear weapons, as well as conventional weapons.

There are issues related to missile defences and their strategic consequences, to the inherent similarities between the technologies used for space-launch vehicles and their peaceful applications and those required for ballistic missiles with military purposes. The Panel also considered the continuing role of missiles in military doctrines, as well as the role and scope of confidence-building measures.

In its discussion, the Panel identified various measures dealing with missiles. While past and existing treaties and agreements make revisions on particular types or aspects of missiles and while some States have adopted related, unilateral measures, the experts concluded that there is at present no universal norm, treaty or agreement governing the development, testing, production, acquisition, transfer, deployment or use specifically of missiles. Taking into consideration the various concerns that were identified, the Panel found it essential to have continued international efforts to deal with the issue of missiles in the interest of international peace and security.

It noted the role of the United Nations in the field of missiles. The Panel also noted the multiple approaches that are being currently employed to deal with the issue of missiles both within and outside the United Nations. It could not, however, single out any particular course of action or combination of actions on the issue. The Panel agreed that the issues identified in the report and all approaches undertaken at the national, bilateral, regional, plurilateral and multilateral levels need to be further explored.

While the results of the study may seem rather modest, I would like to underscore that the report of the Panel of Governmental Experts is the result of a hard-won consensus on an issue that is very complex, both politically and technically. The report reflects in a balanced manner the different perspectives on the issue of missiles. It provides a useful tool for future work on the issue by the United Nations. I submit the report to you for your consideration.

In closing, let me extend my warmest appreciation to the experts who participated in this exercise and who, through their flexibility and readiness to compromise, made this report possible. I would also like to extend my special thanks to the Department for Disarmament, especially to Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala and to Mr. Valère Mantels, who served as Secretary of the Panel. I also wish to thank both the consultants, Mr. Christophe Carle from the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and Mr. Waheguru Pal Sidhu, from the International Peace Academy, for their valuable assistance and support to the work of the Panel.

Mr. Smith (Australia): This debate is about nuclear weapons. However, it is impossible for any Australian representative today not to allude to the horrific event that occurred in Bali this weekend. What happened is a reminder to us all — particularly here in New York, just 12 twelve months after the devastating attack on the World Trade Center — that weapons of mass destruction are not the sole security challenge that we collectively face. Terrorism takes lives in smaller groups than do weapons of mass destruction, but it strikes just as indiscriminately and will be defeated only with common resolve, common purpose and common action. I would like to extend my condolences, through the representative of Indonesia, to the Government and the people of his country, and to the families of all the victims, who came from many different countries represented in this room, including my own.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons remains one of the most serious challenges to global peace and security. Australia, as a non-Nuclear State, is therefore strongly committed to efforts seeking to curb the spread of such weapons and to work towards the goal of nuclear disarmament. Adherence to and strengthening of the existing the nuclear non-proliferation disarmament framework is a key element of that process.

Australia welcomed the commitments given at the 2000 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the constructive outcomes of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the 2005 NPT Review Conference. We also welcome the strong support for draft resolutions in the First Committee last year that reaffirmed the centrality of the NPT in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation process. This was a clear indication of the international community's undiminished commitment to the NPT and to the practical measures agreed at the 2000 Review Conference.

We welcome and are pleased to join in sponsoring Japan's draft resolution (A/C.1/57/L.42) on a path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We particularly welcome those paragraphs in the draft resolution in that give expression to the outcomes of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and which underscore the importance of their full implementation. We hope that the draft resolution on that subject will again attract wide cross-group support including from the nuclear-weapon States.

Australia firmly believes that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved only through a series of balanced, incremental and reinforcing steps. In that regard, early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the productive of fissile material for nuclear weapons are critical.

Accordingly, Australia strongly supports the CTBT, and is actively pursuing an ongoing programme to secure further signatures and ratifications. In that respect, I draw attention to the joint declaration that Australia, Japan and the Netherlands launched last month in New York in support of the CTBT. The declaration encouraged ongoing support for the development of the CTBT verification machinery and adherence to the Treaty, and it set out an action plan to expedite entry into force of the Treaty. We encourage other United Nations Members to associate themselves with the declaration before it is submitted to the Secretary-General.

While it has yet to enter into force, the CTBT has already made a powerful contribution to non-proliferation and disarmament. With 166 signatures and 94 ratifications, the Treaty is a clear expression of the international community's collective will to halt nuclear weapons test explosions. Australia welcomes and is pleased to be a sponsor, with New Zealand, of Mexico's draft resolution on the CTBT (A/C.1/57/L.4). We hope the draft resolution on this subject will again attract wide support.

The international community has long identified the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty as one of the most urgent disarmament and non-proliferation steps the international community should take. Yet, despite having been repeatedly endorsed by all States present here, negotiations on such a treaty have yet to commence. Australia therefore welcomes the submission by Canada of the draft resolution on a cut-off treaty (A/C.1/57/L.44) as an expression of the determination of the international community to work together to conclude a multilateral and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. We very much hope that the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

Australia looks to joining with other delegations in the course of the work of the First Committee in supporting draft resolutions that make a useful and practical contribution to our collective efforts towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): I would like first of all to join others who have expressed their condolences and sense of outrage this morning with regard to the horrific event which occurred over the weekend in Bali, Indonesia. To my Indonesian and Australian colleagues, to the representatives of those other nations whose citizens were killed or injured and to the families of the victims, I offer my Government's deepest sympathies. This sad occurrence reminds us once again of the need for all peace-loving nations to work tirelessly and cooperatively to root out the terror networks that threaten us all.

Let me now return to the subject of today's debate: nuclear weapons. The United States and the

Russian Federation have jointly introduced draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.23, "Bilateral strategic nuclear arms reductions and the new strategic framework."

In Moscow, on 24 May this year, our two countries signed the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions — the Moscow Treaty — along with an accompanying Joint Declaration. We believe that those two documents were positive, concrete achievements in our bilateral relationship and major developments in the reduction of nuclear weapons. We also believe that the strategic reductions the United States and Russia pledged in the Moscow Treaty advance the commitment of both of our nations under article VI of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Taken together, the Moscow Treaty and the Joint Declaration highlight our strengthening bilateral relationship, the new strategic framework, and our mutual determination to work towards a peaceful world. They represent a new, positive direction both for our mutual cooperation and for enhanced international security.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.23 recognizes that new global challenges and threats require a qualitatively new foundation for strategic relations between the United States and the Russian Federation, based on mutual security, trust, openness, cooperation and predictability. It also recognizes our joint determination to work together, and with other nations and international organizations to promote security, economic well-being and a peaceful, prosperous, free world. As one example of that commitment to multilateral cooperation, draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.23 highlights the results of the Kananaskis Summit of the Group of Eight, at which leaders launched a Global Partnership for the support of specific projects to address non-proliferation, disarmament, counter-terrorism and nuclear safety issues.

The United States believes that the reductions in strategic nuclear warheads to which we and Russia have agreed, the new direction in relations between the United States and Russia and our mutual determination to work toward goals cherished by all deserve the endorsement of the world community. We hope that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.23 can be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I should like to express our deepest sympathies to the delegation of Indonesia and to the delegations of other countries that suffered casualties as a result of the tragic events that took place recently in Bali.

The Russian Federation, together with the United States of America, is submitting to the First Committee for its consideration the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.23, entitled "Bilateral strategic nuclear arms reductions and the new strategic framework". The Treaty concluded between Russia and the United States at the Moscow summit in May this year on reducing strategic offensive capabilities confirms our commitment to a course of ongoing reductions of nuclear weapons. That document sets out agreements on the mutual reduction, by 31 December 2012, of the total number of strategic nuclear warheads to an agreed level that does not exceed 1,700 to 2,200 units for each of the parties. In other words, it calls for a reduction to levels approximately three times lower than those established under the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START I).

The Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions was made possible mostly by the new strategic relations between Russia and the United States, enshrined in the Joint Declaration adopted at Moscow in May. In that Declaration, Russia and the United States not only expressed their intention to build partnerships based on the principles of mutual security, trust, openness, cooperation and predictability, but also reaffirmed their determination to work together with other States and with international organizations in order to strengthen peace and strategic security. That is also reflected in the draft resolution that we are submitting.

In the light of the objective linkage between strategic offensive and defensive weapons, the parties agreed in the Joint Declaration to implement a number of measures aimed at confidence-building and at enhancing transparency in the field of anti-missile defence. Dialogue on those issues, linked to a subsequent strengthening of global strategic security, has already begun in the Consultative Group for Strategic Security among the ministers for foreign affairs and for defence of Russia and the United States.

At their first meeting, held on 21 September this year in Washington, the parties considered the issue of implementing the May agreements and, in particular,

established a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of their work. In that regard, the Consultative Group will rely on working groups of experts in thematic areas such as strategic offensive weapons, anti-missile defence and non-proliferation. It is also important to note that START I will continue in force and, with the consent of the parties, can be extended, which means that the strategic offensive capabilities of Russia and of the United States will be subject to dual mutually complementary limitations under both treaties. Russia is planning to ratify the new Treaty by the end of this year.

The Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions will play an important role in strengthening the system of international treaties and agreements in the field of disarmament and arms control. It will also constitute a significant contribution by Russia and the United States to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, through the implementation of obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Also of unquestionable international significance is the stated commitment of Russia and the United States, in the Joint Declaration, to work both bilaterally and multilaterally to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of the means of their delivery, particularly in the context of combating terrorism.

As called for in the draft resolution, we must unite the efforts of the entire international community, on the basis of generally recognized principles of non-proliferation — including the principles approved by the leaders of the Group of Eight at the Kananaskis Summit, held in June 2002 — to meet the current objective of preventing terrorists from acquiring or developing nuclear, chemical, radiological or biological weapons, missiles, or related components, equipment or technologies. Those principles are aimed at intensifying the fight against terrorism and strengthening international security, and they in no way constitute an impediment to the socio-economic development of States.

We should like to express our sincere gratitude to all the States participating in the work of the First Committee that have welcomed in their statements the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty between Russia and the United States. We call on all members to support the draft resolution submitted for consideration by Russia and the United States, "Bilateral strategic nuclear arms reductions and the new strategic framework". We look forward to the adoption of that draft resolution by consensus.

Ms. Valle Pereira (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia and Chile — States parties and associates of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) — I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on the high quality of the First Committee's work during the current session and to express our appreciation for the cooperation provided by the members of the Bureau thus far.

Our consideration of the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is welcomed by the expanded MERCOSUR, which was the first organized subregion to formally become a party to that important Treaty. That indicates the historic commitment of our countries to improving the mechanisms and instruments in the sphere of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and of other weapons of mass destruction. In particular, I should like to put on record that the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, at its 32nd regular session, held on 4 June this year, adopted its resolution 1876, which urged States in the region that had not yet done so — especially the countries included in annex 2 to the Treaty — to sign or to ratify it, as appropriate, so that it might enter into force as soon as possible. We have already achieved important progress in that regard with the decisions adopted at the Second Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, chaired by Mexico, and through the combined efforts of Mexico and other States in the period following that meeting.

The international community faces a changing reality full of challenges. This year, we initiated the process that will lead to the holding of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We hope that the Conference will lead to the strengthening of international peace and security through concrete measures in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Without question, we are concerned at the possibility that weapons of mass destruction might get into the hands of terrorists. But we do not believe that measures to counter such threats can justify in any way the indefinite retention of such weapons by those that

have them or any other steps that could lead to uncertainty as to the full enforcement of the NPT.

We have witnessed with concern the recent tension in South Asia between two States operating nuclear installations not subject to safeguards. This confirms our belief that the NPT must speedily be implemented. The effective implementation of the NPT must lead to a firm, clear cut and unequivocal commitment on the part of States that have not yet signed and ratified it to do so and thus to lead us to a nuclear-weapon-free world. Those countries must give a very clear cut indication of their intentions with regard to the Treaty. The putting in place of an international monitoring system must be paralleled by prospects that the NPT will become a full-fledged reality. The functioning of the monitoring system must not be hastened merely on the basis of technical considerations that do not take into account the universal and non-discriminatory nature of the Treaty that gave rise to the system.

In conclusion, let me say that at the same time that the countries members of MERCOSUR express their readiness to promote increased international accession to the NPT, they express their strongest support for retaining a moratorium on nuclear testing until the Treaty comes into force.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Hungary, President of the Conference on Disarmament, to introduce the report of the Conference.

Mr. Szabó (Hungary): Allow me to extend to you, Sir, my warmest congratulations on your election to the high office of Chairman of the Committee and wish you every success in discharging your responsibilities.

I take the floor in my capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament to present the report (A/57/27) of the Conference on its 2002 session and the related draft resolution, which is contained in document A/C.1/57/L.13. The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has a crucial role to play in addressing existing and new challenges in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The terrorist attacks of 11 September last year against the United States made it clear that the world is confronted with a qualitatively new threat with serious repercussions in such fields as nuclear non-proliferation, safety and security. They made the international community aware of the need to explore new measures for halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Those tragic events must be a catalyst for the Conference to resume substantive work with a renewed sense of urgency.

The 2002 session of the Conference saw valuable attempts to breach the existing divergences of views on key issues on the disarmament agenda in order to overcome the stalemate that continues to paralyze the work of the Conference. Intensive consultations were conducted in 2002 by the successive Presidents of the Conference in order to reach consensus on a programme of work. A group of former Presidents of the Conference — Ambassadors Dembri, Lint, Reyes Rodríguez, Salandre and Vega — presented to the Conference a joint proposal on a comprehensive programme of work. This evolutionary cross-group initiative takes into account earlier proposals, in particular the Amorim proposal, as well as the various views of States Members of the Conference. That unprecedented, promising proposal enjoyed appreciation from a wide range of delegations and will be further explored during preparations for the 2003 session.

The Conference also demonstrated its ability to address new challenges by revisiting the issue of radiological weapons through a number of open-ended consultations. The Conference also decided to appoint Special Coordinators on the review of its agenda, on the expansion of its membership and on its improved effective functioning. While agreeing that priority should be given to pursuing substantive work, the Conference recommended that Special Coordinators on relevant procedural issues should be appointed, if deemed necessary, during its 2003 session.

In order to promote substantive progress during the 2003 session, the Conference has requested me, as well as the incoming President, to conduct appropriate consultations during the intersessional period and to make recommendations recognizing the support of the Conference for the Amorin proposal, taking into account all existing proposals, views presented and discussions held in this year's session.

I can assure members that no effort will be spared to come up with a proposal to end the stalemate in the Conference. Despite these efforts and new initiatives, the Conference, however, could not manage to agree on a programme of work. It was generally felt that

political will, especially on the part of the key players, remains essential to resume substantive activities.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.13 follows, in general, the usual pattern and content of resolutions on the subject adopted at previous sessions of the General Assembly. However, it also attempts to encapsulate the main achievements of the Conference during its 2002 session, as I outlined before. These developments, recorded in the report of the Conference, have been faithfully translated into the language of the draft resolution, particularly in its paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, which, after broad and intensive discussions, enjoys the support of the Conference member States.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, despite its current stalemate, continues to play an important role in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. This draft resolution, if adopted, will without doubt provide stimulus to the commencement of the substantive work of the Conference. Therefore, I would recommend that draft resolution in A/C.1/57/L.13 be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Let me also join preceding speakers in conveying our deepest condolences to the delegation of Indonesia with respect to the deadly terrorist attack in Bali over the weekend. We also offer our condolences to those other delegations whose nationals perished in that cowardly act of terror.

I have asked for the floor to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.40, entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons," on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Colombia, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Fiji, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Viet Nam, Zambia and my own delegation.

The provision of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States is an obligation which arises from the United Nations Charter. The Charter obligates Member States not to use, or threaten to use, force. This obligation extends to the non-use of and non-threat of use of any weapons, including nuclear weapons. Indeed, this fact was underlined by the resolution of the General Assembly adopted at its first session, which outlawed nuclear weapons.

The demand for security assurances was raised by the non-nuclear-weapon States in the 1960s. It crystallized in 1968, during the concluding phase of the negotiations for the NPT. The response of the nuclear-weapon States, reflected in Security Council resolution 255 (1968), was considered grossly inadequate by the non-nuclear-weapon States.

At the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament (SSOD I), agreement was reached for the conclusion of an international instrument that would provide binding and credible negative security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States. However, the declarations made by four of the five nuclear-weapon States at SSOD I, and later at the NPT Extension Conference, and reflected in Security Council resolution 984 (1995), was also considered insufficient, qualified and partial by most of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

At the end of the cold war, there was a general expectation that it would become easier for nuclear-weapon States to extend nuclear security assurances to the non-possessor States. Unfortunately, the situation, instead of becoming easier, has become more complex, for the following reasons.

First, with the indefinite extension of the NPT, most nuclear-weapon States have presumed the permanent right to retain nuclear weapons.

Secondly, the commitment contained in article VI of the NPT for complete nuclear disarmament has remained open-ended, even after the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which called for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Thirdly, new doctrines of possible use of nuclear weapons, contrary to resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995) of the Security Council, have been propounded, involving, for example, the use of nuclear weapons against the use, or threat of use, of biological and chemical weapons.

Fourthly, one major nuclear-weapon State, which formerly adhered to the principle of the non-first use of nuclear weapons, has now disavowed this principle and has adopted the posture of first use of nuclear weapons.

Finally, two additional nuclear-arms States have emerged on the world scene, and there is one other

presumed nuclear-arms State whose status and obligations remain unclear.

Under the circumstances, the conclusion of credible negative security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States has gained greater urgency. The sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.40 seek to underline and to operationalize this sense of urgency.

The draft is similar to the ones adopted at previous sessions of the Committee. It reaffirms the urgent need to reach an early agreement on effective international arrangements on negative security assurances. It notes with satisfaction that there is no objection in principle to the idea of an international convention on the subject. It appeals to all States, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to work towards an early agreement, and it recommends further intensification of efforts to evolve a common approach and a common formula on this issue.

Finally, it recommends that the Conference on Disarmament actively continue intensive negotiations, with a view to reaching early agreement on negative security assurances.

The sponsors believe that the conclusion of effective arrangements on negative security assurances could constitute a major confidence-building measure in the current tense international situation between the nuclear and the non-nuclear-weapon States, as well as among the nuclear-weapon States. Secondly, it could contribute to reducing the nuclear danger. It could ease the threats which arise from new doctrines of nuclear use and facilitate negotiations for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

My delegation and the sponsors therefore urge the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.40 by the widest possible margin.

Mr. Wespal (Canada): I wish to join those who spoke before me in expressing heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the Government and to the people of Indonesia, as well as to the families and friends in many countries — including Canada — of victims of the horrific act of terror on Bali this past weekend. The cowards who did this do not daunt us. They unite us, rather, in fresh resolve to bring them down.

Earlier terror in this country, a year ago on 11 September, vividly demonstrated our vulnerability to those prepared to use modern technology for mass murder. Our Committee and other international bodies have responded with fresh determination to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to confront the lethal risks posed by stockpiles of sensitive materials, and to reinforce multilateralism at the core of international non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament action.

The Group of Eight, over which Canada now presides, responded by launching in June a Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Equally important is the universal adoption of the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), including the Additional Protocol, and the strengthening of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

With all this recent talk about weapons of mass destruction as a single category, we need always to remember that nuclear weapons are in a class of their own: utterly indiscriminate and indescribably lethal. Canada remains deeply committed to the promise at the heart of the NPT, and its recognition that non-proliferation and credible progress towards disarmament are fundamentally interdependent.

This interdependence was clear in the 13-step Action Plan agreed at the 2000 Review Conference. That is why Canada has emphasized the reporting requirement outlined in the twelfth step of that Plan as a key measure to ensure transparency and reinforce the accountability on which the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995 was based. That is why we have welcomed the reductions of deployed strategic nuclear weapons in the Treaty of Moscow as evidence of United States and Russian fidelity to article VI, and it is why we are pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) put forward by Mexico and co-sponsored by Australia and New Zealand.

It is also why I am pleased this morning to present formally draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.44, entitled "The Conference on Disarmament decision (CD/1547) of 11 August 1998 to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament', an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning

the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

The draft resolution is identical to resolution 56/24 J of last year, which was adopted without a vote by this Committee and by the General Assembly.

We are all aware of the long history of this proposal and of the fact that complex negotiations lie ahead. The draft resolution is essentially procedural, and is anchored firmly in the expectations and current realities of the international community. It expresses determination that we might all, together, conclude an effectively and internationally verifiable multilateral treaty banning the production of fissile material for weapons or other explosive devices. Such a treaty is fundamental to both disarmament and non-proliferation. We very much hope that the draft resolution will be adopted without amendment and without a vote.

The draft resolution already has a large number of sponsors from all regions. We continue to welcome all who wish to join us as sponsors in this expression of fundamental security interest.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.34.

Ms. Valle Pereira (Brazil): I have the honour of introducing draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.34, entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", on behalf of the following sponsors: Angola, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Colombia, the Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Liberia, Madagascar, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nauru, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Samoa, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Tonga, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela and Viet Nam. I also wish to acknowledge that, since draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.34 was submitted, other countries have also decided to sponsor it. I would like to point out that the majority of those countries are members of the four existing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

This is the seventh consecutive year in which a draft resolution on this important matter has been introduced for consideration in the First Committee. Once again, Brazil has the honour of being joined by New Zealand in initiating a draft resolution that in last year's version received 148 votes in favour. That adoption by an overwhelming majority was consistent with the pattern that has characterized the adoption of such texts since 1996. We express the hope that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.34 will enjoy similar broad support. This year's draft resolution has some changes relative to resolution 56/24 G. Besides the required updating, it alludes to two particularly important developments. First, it welcomes the decision taken by Cuba to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which will result in the establishment of the first inhabited nuclear-weapon-free zone encompassing all the States of Latin American and Caribbean. Secondly, it welcomes the ratification by the Kingdom of Tonga of the Treaty of Rarotonga, which completes the list of regional parties to the South Pacific nuclear-weapon-free zone. These are important steps in our progress towards the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere, and we warmly commend them.

The further development of nuclear-weapon-free zones in some regions is one of the most significant measures in the field of nuclear disarmament. Gradually, in various parts of the world, the nuclear option is being ruled out. As a nuclear-weapon-free world is an aspiration of our peoples, the objective of eliminating nuclear weapons is reinforced by extending, through new nuclear-weapon-free zones, the geographical space where they are illegal. Taken together with the Antarctic Treaty, the regional treaties contribute to freeing from nuclear weapons the southern hemisphere, as well as the adjacent areas north of the equator where the treaties apply.

The States parties to those treaties, in close consultation with their neighbours, have renounced the acquisition of nuclear weapons and have accepted stringent verification commitments to that effect. Our initiative aims to achieve recognition by the General Assembly, for the seventh consecutive year, of the progressive emergence of a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas. Such recognition should be viewed as confirmation of the international community's commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament. We want to reiterate that, as in previous years, our draft resolution does not create new legal obligations. Neither does it contradict any norm of international law applicable to navigation, such as those contained in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We call upon those

States that have not yet done so to move towards ratification of the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties and their protocols. The idea that most of the globe is free from nuclear weapons is a powerful one. It adds momentum to the process of nuclear disarmament and bolsters the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

We wish to put on record our appreciation to all those who voted in favour of resolution 56/24 G last year. We expect this year's text to continue to receive the support that it deserves from all States committed to nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.51.

Mr. Sood (India): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons", contained in document A/C.1/57/L.51, under agenda item 67 (d). The draft resolution is sponsored by Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, the Congo, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Fiji, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, the Sudan, Tuvalu, Viet Nam, Zambia and India.

The draft resolution underlines the need to address threats to international peace and security and to take certain measures to eliminate those threats. The spectre of nuclear threat from nations or groups cannot be wished away as long as such weapons are not eradicated completely. The security to which we and future generations are entitled can be achieved only by the total prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

It is a matter of deep concern that nuclear weapons continue to be viewed as a legitimate currency of power, with some countries claiming the right to possess them in perpetuity. Doctrines of first use have been revalidated and reaffirmed. There are those who reserve the right to use nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear threats or threats from other weapons of mass destruction.

This threat to humanity must be addressed at all levels. At the level of political commitment, backed by legally binding agreements, nuclear doctrines should be oriented towards no-first-use and non-use against non-nuclear-weapon States. It would be a good beginning in the process of de-legitimizing nuclear weapons globally.

We believe that the international community should actively participate in a step-by-step process towards a legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. There should remain no scope for justification of the use of nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution, as in previous years, reiterates that "the use of nuclear weapons poses the most serious threat to the survival of mankind". It refers to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) of 1996 that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict and that a multilateral agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would strengthen international security and contribute to the creation of a climate that would be decisive for negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons. The ICJ also pronounced the need for negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, under strict and effective international control. The ICJ, by making international humanitarian law applicable to the use of nuclear weapons, provided the legal underpinning for such an instrument.

We remain committed to the goal of global nuclear disarmament, and it is in this context that my delegation is bringing before this Committee, once again, as it has done since 1982, a draft resolution calling for a convention to be negotiated for "prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances".

The draft resolution requests the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

We, along with the other sponsors of this draft resolution, believe that it will receive the widest possible support in this Committee so that the international community can take this very decisive step towards freeing the world of nuclear weapons.

Ms. Inoguchi (Japan): First of all, I would like to extend sincere condolences on behalf of my Government, through the delegation of Indonesia, to the people and the Government of Indonesia, and our deepest sympathy goes out to those who lost their

family members in the terrible explosion in Bali over the weekend.

I have asked to take the floor in order to introduce a draft resolution entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons", contained in document A/C.1./57/L.42. We highly appreciate Australia's having already become a sponsor of the draft resolution

Every year since 1994, the Government of Japan has submitted a draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons, and it has always been adopted with overwhelming support.

As the only country affected by nuclear bombs, Japan's diplomatic effort each year in tabling a nuclear disarmament draft resolution demonstrates the genuine wish of its people for the realization of a safe world, free of nuclear weapons.

The Government of Japan believes that nuclear disarmament should be advanced by taking concrete steps, one by one, towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This draft resolution presents a path composed of such steps.

Allow me to explain some of the salient points contained in the draft resolution: first of all, it continues to fully endorse the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). All States should reaffirm their determination to implement all the conclusions of the Review Conference, including the practical steps related to article VI, by supporting this draft resolution. I would like to confirm, in particular, the fact that an unequivocal undertaking was already given at the 2000 NPT Review Conference by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. It is necessary to continue to stress the importance of this undertaking.

Secondly, the draft resolution strongly advocates the importance and urgency of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). As I indicated in my general statement, Japan is among those countries which are most actively promoting the entry into force of the CTBT. At the same time, in view of the current situation, in which the prospects for the early entry into force of the CTBT are not encouraging, it is also important to call for the continuation of moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosions, pending the achievement of that goal.

Thirdly, the draft resolution calls for the establishment of two subsidiary bodies, one to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty, and the other to deal with nuclear disarmament, as early as possible, during the 2003 session of the Conference on Disarmament. This appeal is reflective of our belief that the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament must be broken, so that substantive work can begin immediately.

Fourthly, the draft resolution also calls for a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. It should be recalled that it was not possible to include this measure in the agreement at the 2000 NPT Review Conference; however, in our draft resolution, we have explicitly called for it. We believe that this measure will carry the agenda of nuclear disarmament one step further and will build upon the agreement at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Fifthly, the draft resolution mentions the need for deeper reduction by all nuclear-weapon States as they work towards the total elimination of these weapons.

Finally, in view of the paramount importance of the fight against terrorism, the draft resolution also addresses the need to take concrete measures to prevent nuclear, as well as radiological, terrorism.

The co-sponsoring Governments believe that strong support for this draft resolution will demonstrate the firm commitment of the international community to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Esenli (Turkey): Mr. Chairman, my delegation did not intend to take the floor at this point. However, in the wake of the terrorist attack that showed its dastardly face, this time in Bali, late on Saturday, we were compelled to do so. On behalf of my delegation, I wish to extend our condolences to the Government of Indonesia and our sympathies and condolences to the grieving families that lost their loved ones, and to those delegations whose citizens perished, namely, Australia, Singapore, Canada, United States, United Kingdom and Ecuador, according to early accounts. The terrorist attack in Bali is another stark reminder that terrorism does not have a set of rules to which the members of civilized societies in this room can relate. The only motto that terrorism upholds is "everything and anything is acceptable as long as it

sows the seeds of fear, panic and desperation in people, and as long as it shakes the fundamental principles on which the international community stands".

Turkey is a country that has suffered extensively from the scourge of terrorism. The only way to fight this global menace is to act resolutely and in unison. For this Committee, we have to do everything that is necessary to avoid terrorists' getting their hands on weapons of mass destruction, inter alia, nuclear weapons.

Mr. Wiranata-Atmadja (Indonesia): Allow me, on behalf of the Government and delegation of Indonesia, through you, Mr. Chairman, to thank the delegations that have expressed their sympathy and condolences about the tragic event that recently occurred in Bali. The Government of Indonesia has made it very clear that we will continue our commitment to fight terrorism.

For a number of years, nuclear and related issues have been the preoccupation of this Committee. The deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament has perhaps rendered our task more important in meeting the growing concern over the lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament. Hence it is expected that we seek wider areas of agreement on issues which have for so long eluded us. That may facilitate the resumption of negotiations in Geneva.

Nuclear issues constitute a continuum that includes, inter alia, the non-proliferation regime, nuclear-weapon-free zones, banning the use of fissile materials for weapons, access to relevant technology for peaceful purposes and security assurances. Specifically, the inseparable nature of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament has long been self-evident. In its absence, the edifice and infrastructure built around the total abolition of such weapons cannot continue on a viable and durable foundation.

An agreement or treaty to cut deployed arsenals, while keeping large contingency arsenals in reserve stockpiles, is not what the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation or Nuclear Weapon States (NPT) had in mind when they pursued a renewed commitment to article VI in their 1995 statement of principles and objectives. Nor is that what they had in mind, at the 2000 NPT review exercise, when they secured an unequivocal undertaking by nuclear-weapon States in the final document to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Reiterating strategic doctrines, developing and acquiring nuclear weapons and maintaining a permanent rationale are incompatible with those commitments. Rather than incremental progress, concrete and credible advances have become imperative, including deep unilateral and reciprocal cuts in offensive capabilities.

Equally important is the freezing of the total number of arsenals at the current levels. One critical issue is the extent and pace of negotiations leading to the total abolition of nuclear arsenals. A genuine commitment could prepare the ground for more drastic cuts to bolster the efforts for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Of immediate concern is the question of nuclear danger, about which the Secretary-General has warned and which was recognized by the Millennium Summit in its Declaration. Such dangers may emanate from a vast array of sources, including nuclear weapons and reactors, spent fuels and other radioactive materials. Apart from the dangers posed by technical malfunctioning and deliberate political and military decisions, the unpredictable consequences stemming from nuclear theft and terrorism cannot remain in the realm of speculation indefinitely.

So-called tactical nuclear weapons, which constitute more than half of the global stockpile of nuclear warheads, are not covered by any agreement. Although conceived in the context of the cold war, such weapons continue to be maintained on high-alert status, which has lost its rationale. Continued reliance on strategic weapons for security has rendered those weapons redundant. They have diminished military value and have, in fact, become obsolete. Genuine nuclear disarmament should therefore begin with the elimination of these destabilizing weapons, whose very existence is fraught with the danger of unauthorized or accidental use. Immediate reductions in nuclear deployments will also contribute to a reduction of those dangers. Reducing the number of warheads and renouncing strategic doctrines based on the utility of nuclear weapons are other mutually reinforcing paths.

My delegation is reminded of an observation made by the Secretary-General in his report to the Millennium Assembly that "the nuclear weapon States continue to insist that those weapons in their hands enhance security, while in the hands of others they are a threat to world peace." (*A/54/2000, para. 249*) To

that remark we would like to add that nuclear weapons are dangerous in the hands of everyone.

Mr. Haug (Norway): First of all, let me join my colleagues in conveying our sincere sympathy and condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia for the horrific terrorist attack in Bali. Our sympathy and condolences also to those countries whose citizens died in the attack. This attack once again demonstrates that international terrorism constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

As pointed out in our general statement, the Norwegian Government continues to see the NPT as the cornerstone of international non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is one of the major pillars of the NPT regime. Universal adherence to, and the early entry into force of, the CTBT continues to be a high priority for Norway, despite the difficulties encountered in this process. We call upon the three non-signatories and the 10 non-ratifying States, whose signatures and ratifications are necessary for the Treaty's entry into force, to do so without further delay.

Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, it is important that the moratoriums on tests remain. Such self-imposed moratoriums cannot, however, replace the legally binding commitments represented by the signature and ratification of the CTBT. The CTBT's verification regime is at the core of the Treaty. Full implementation of the international monitoring system, as soon as possible, without waiting for the Treaty's entry into force, would represent a significant confidence- and security-building measure. Financial and diplomatic support to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization must continue unabated.

We are therefore pleased to sponsor the draft resolution that has been introduced on the CTBT (A/C.1/57/L.4). Likewise, we are pleased to sponsor the draft resolution on a fissile material cut-off treaty (A/C.1/57/L.44). A cut-off treaty is the next logical step on the multilateral arms-control agenda, and is essential if we are to advance the cause of nuclear non-proliferation.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/57/L.2 and A/C.1/57/L.3.

Mr. Dowling (Ireland): I wish to introduce two draft resolutions on behalf of their sponsors, who are members of the New Agenda Coalition — Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden. The draft resolutions are contained in documents A/C.1/57/L.2 and A/C.1/57/L.3, respectively.

I propose to address draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.3 first. The draft resolution, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", is an effort to engage this Committee with a view to giving a new impetus to nuclear disarmament.

The sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 2000 provided the forum for the elaboration of a set of agreements on the elements of and structure for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Importantly, the Final Document fundamentally alters the context in which nuclear disarmament must henceforth be pursued. That context is the unequivocal commitment by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament.

In 1995, the NPT States parties renewed their commitment to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective nuclear disarmament measures. By the time we reach the NPT Review Conference of 2005, a full decade will have passed. The undertakings made by States parties at the 2000 NPT Review Conference have mapped out the practical steps through which such progress can be achieved. The current NPT Preparatory Committee process provides a facilitating framework. We, as an international community, must take the agreed practical steps. As we said in our statement in the general debate on 30 September, our continued indecision leaves us as vulnerable to a nuclear event as at any time in our history.

Now, then, is the time to reinvigorate the wider nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation debate so as to respond with tangible results. In this urgent context, the draft resolution, in its operative paragraphs, calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee to deal specifically with nuclear disarmament; wishes to see the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty enter into force as soon as possible, with confirmation of the moratorium on all test explosions; expresses deep concern about the continued retention of the nuclear-weapons option by

the three States that have not yet acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and calls on them to do so and to bring into force the full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency; seeks the resumption of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives; seeks to prevent an arms race in outer space and calls on the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish an ad hoc committee to deal with this issue; and calls on the nuclear-weapon States to respect fully their existing commitments with regard to security assurances and for recommendations on this issue to be made to the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

The sponsors of this draft resolution welcome and intend to continue to conduct informal consultations with other delegations with a view to achieving the widest possible support. We will bring forward a revised version of the draft resolution later in the session, as we will wish to take account of certain new and welcome developments, such as Cuba's announcement of its intention to accede to the NPT and the finalization of the negotiations among the Central Asian States of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. As we have indicated in informal contacts, we are also ready to look at possible adjustments to the language of the text where clarification of the intent may be necessary, provided the thrust of the resolution remains unchanged.

I also take this opportunity to introduce, on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.2, entitled "Reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons". This is a very straightforward draft resolution. As indicated in the general debate, the sponsors of the draft resolution believe that the existence of these weapons is a matter of concern for the international community. In particular, the commitment made in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference to the further reduction of non-strategic weapons creates for us all a priority which this draft resolution seeks to fulfil. The draft resolution expresses the view that the reduction and elimination of non-strategic nuclear weapons should be included as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process.

The draft resolution reflects these concerns and calls, in particular, for the issue to be addressed as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process; reductions to be carried out in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner; and the development of further confidence-building measures with regard to non-strategic nuclear weapons and a reduction in their operational status. Both of these latter measures would be entirely consistent with efforts to achieve an irreversible and transparent process which leads to their elimination.

Again, as we have already indicated with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.3, the sponsors of this draft resolution are very open to comments on the draft from other delegations and will continue informal consultations with a view to bringing forward a revised text somewhat later.

We believe that the two draft resolutions we are putting forward can act as a catalyst for meaningful progress and concrete action. They have the necessary operational flexibility to meet the concerns of all like-minded States. Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala, in his introductory remarks two weeks, ago referred to the need for results-based disarmament. The two draft resolutions being submitted by the New Agenda Coalition are tabled in that spirit and we invite like-minded States to support them also in a spirit of shared global concern.

Mr. Kadiri (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Nuclear arms are undeniably the most dangerous and frightening weapons of mass destruction that have ever been designed by humankind. They continue to threaten the eradication of all vestiges of life from the surface of our little planet.

This threat justifies the consensual determination of the international community to make the elimination of those weapons a central priority. The proliferation of such weapons in today's world is a fundamental sign of the lack of trust among States, despite the fact that a sense of the common fate of individuals and peoples continues to grow with the acceleration of globalization.

Of course, praiseworthy and considerable efforts to reduce such weapons have been undertaken unilaterally and bilaterally. In that respect, we welcome the conclusion last May of the Moscow Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions.

However, praiseworthy as such efforts may be, they are no substitute for the total elimination of those weapons, which remains the international community's ultimate objective and the best guarantee against the threat of such weapons.

The positive outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) allowed us to hope that we were making progress towards multilateral and irreversible nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately, however, very few specific results followed. Even the proceedings of the first preparatory session for the 2005 NPT Review Conference were unable to achieve a consensus on questions of procedure, particularly the need for States parties to submit regular reports on the implementation of their nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments. We hope that the second preparatory session, which will take place next year, will provide another opportunity to take up the questions pending with a greater sense of responsibility and more transparency and common will to strengthen multilateral non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regimes.

Of course, the bioterrorist threat is a great concern. But we believe that it should encourage us to strengthen regimes of weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, nuclear weapons are the most difficult aspect of the problem.

The Kingdom of Morocco attaches great importance to disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It fully endorses the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and believes that removing the obstacles that continue to impede universalization of the NPT and the entry into force of the CTBT is the best way to contribute to peace-building and world security. Based on that, my country wishes to reiterate its full support for the efforts made at the international level to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT, whose role is to put in place the necessary structures for international verification of nuclear tests. In that regard, we support the draft resolutions related to that issue.

We are convinced that review of the nuclear question by the Conference on Disarmament is also a main concern to non-nuclear States. Therefore, we support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones where they do not exist, as an essential aspect of nuclear non-proliferation and the strengthening of international security. It is clear that commitments made by States within the framework of the NPT and the decisions of treaty review conferences undoubtedly contribute to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to creating a climate of trust in international relations. Similarly, we believe that the universalization of a system of guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and strengthening its means of verification will continue to be an important factor in consolidating instruments of nuclear non-proliferation.

Nevertheless, we believe that the fight against nuclear proliferation should not thwart the legitimate aspirations of developing countries that are opting for nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Nigeria, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): Let me join previous speakers, on behalf of my delegation, in expressing our condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to all other countries that were victims of terrorist attacks in Bali, Indonesia, over the weekend.

I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38, entitled "United Nations disarmament fellowship training and advisory services", on behalf of the following countries: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Romania, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The delegations of Sierra Leone and Laos have also requested to be included among the sponsors of this draft resolution.

The United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Training and Advisory Services has continued to

contribute significantly to developing greater awareness of the importance and benefits of disarmament and better understanding of concerns of the international community in the field of disarmament and security, as well as enhancing the knowledge and skills of fellows, allowing them to participate more effectively in efforts in the field of disarmament at all levels.

The programme has trained a large number of officials from Member States throughout its 24 years of existence, many of whom hold positions of responsibility within their own Governments. The forms of assistance available under the programme to Member States, in particular to developing countries, will enhance the capabilities of their officials to follow in the ongoing deliberations and negotiations on disarmament, both bilateral and multilateral.

The draft resolution reaffirms the decision contained in annex IV of the Concluding Document of the twelfth special session of the General Assembly and the report of the Secretary-General, approved by the Assembly in its resolution 33/71 E of 14 December 1978. It also expresses appreciation to the Government of Germany for hosting participants of the programme since 1980, to the Government of Japan on the occasion of its twentieth annual study visit for the fellows, which included events in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and to the Government of the United States for having organized in 2001 a specific study programme in the field of disarmament, thereby contributing to the fulfilment of the overall objectives of the programme.

It also expresses appreciation to the IAEA, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the Monterey Institute of International Studies for having organized specific study programmes in the field of disarmament in their respective areas of competence, thereby contributing to the overall objectives of the programme. It also commends the Secretary-General for the diligence with which the programme has continued to be carried out.

The draft resolution already has a large number of sponsors from all regions. It has always been adopted without a vote at previous sessions of the General Assembly. We express our appreciation to this Committee and to the General Assembly for having adopted the draft resolution without a vote at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. We, therefore, urge its adoption without a vote at this session.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): Since this is the first time I take the floor in this Committee, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your appointment. It is a pleasure to work under your guidance. Please be assured of the support of my delegation. We have full confidence in your ability to bring the work of this Committee to a successful conclusion.

First of all, allow me to express on behalf of the Netherlands Government our deep sympathy and condolences to Indonesia and to those countries whose citizens have fallen victim to the abhorrent terrorist act that took place in Bali over the weekend.

I have not taken the floor to speak about nuclear disarmament, but I wish to draw representatives' attention to the following.

This year, we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. In the Register, Member States are requested to report on a voluntary basis on imports and exports of seven categories of major conventional arms and, if they wish, on their holdings. Over the last 10 years, more than 162 Governments have participated one or more times in this reporting instrument, while almost all the major producers, exporters and importers of conventional arms have reported regularly to the Register. The Secretariat estimates that the Register captures more than 95 per cent of the global trade in the seven categories of major conventional arms that it covers. Over the past 10 years, the Netherlands, with the support of more than 120 co-sponsors, has submitted the transparency in armaments resolution to the First Committee to support the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

The reason for my taking the floor is to tell the Committee that, to mark the tenth anniversary of the Register, all delegations are invited to a symposium that will be organized by the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Governments of Japan and the Netherlands, with the support of the delegations of Canada and Germany. This symposium will be held tomorrow, Tuesday 15 October, in conference room 1 from 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. The symposium will be followed by a reception. A leaflet was circulated in this room last week giving all the details.

I would greatly appreciate representatives' attendance at the symposium and I very much look forward to seeing them tomorrow.

Mr. Salander (Sweden): Let me first express Sweden's condolences and sympathy to Indonesia and also to other countries affected by the attack in Bali.

I have taken the floor in order to inform all delegations that the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Disarmament, together with the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, invite representatives to a seminar on practical confidence-building measures, entitled "Does good governance of the security sector matter?" We invite all interested delegations to the seminar, which will be held on Wednesday between 1.45 p.m. and 5 p.m. in the Church centre across the street, where lunch will also be provided.

Five papers have been distributed today. They are also to be found in a white envelope on the table by the entrance. The speakers on Wednesday will discuss the growing recognition of good governance of the security sector as a political and military confidence-building measure. All delegations are welcome.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.

United Nations A/C.1/57/PV.12

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

First Committee
12th meeting
Tuesday, 15 October 2002, at 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman: As reflected in document A/C.1/57/CRP.2, this morning's meeting has been allocated for delegations to make statements regarding other weapons of mass destruction and outer space. Delegations are also invited to introduce draft resolutions.

I see that we have with us today our junior colleagues from the Disarmament Fellowship Programme. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to warmly welcome them, and I sincerely hope that the work of this Committee will provide invaluable experience and training to the next generation of disarmament experts.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Argentine Republic would like first and foremost to reaffirm its firm commitment to disarmament and international security as indispensable prerequisites for making possible a peaceful and constructive relationship among nations and for promoting their development. In this context, it is of particular importance that we attain the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is called upon to carry out. This, however, is a difficult undertaking which implies the destruction of huge arsenals and requires substantial financial contributions. It also requires the political will of the international community to attain the crucial objective of the universality of the Convention. In that connection, allow me to state that my Government is delighted at the recent accession of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the Convention, which brings to 146 the number of States parties that are bound by the Convention.

The OPCW must also ensure the attainment of another objective of the Convention: non-proliferation. In many instances, this endeavour involves the avoidance of the use of widely available chemicals, often used also in agriculture, to make sure that these are not diverted for non-peaceful purposes. This is a particularly important undertaking at a time when the international community is threatened by terrorism, which has shown itself ready to resort to any weapon of mass destruction to sow hatred and destruction. By the same token, the preamble to the Convention is clear that the achievements of chemistry are to be used solely and exclusively for the benefit of humankind. This highlights the importance of the task being carried out by the OPCW, and once again emphasizes the significance of international cooperation to give developing countries the human and technological resources to engage in chemical activities for purposes not prohibited by that Convention.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-63871 (E)

Another major task incumbent upon nations under the Convention is to make sure that national legislation be adapted to facilitate the monitoring and punishment of violations of the Convention.

This year, the OPCW has endured a crisis that has severely curtailed its activities and threatened its future. Fortunately, with the cooperation of all States parties, it was possible to overcome the crisis and restore the climate of harmony and cooperation that must prevail among all its members, and between them and the Technical Secretariat, to ensure that the organization's goals are attained.

We are delighted indeed that States parties have placed their confidence in an Argentine diplomat, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, to head the Technical Secretariat during this new phase that we have now entered. We are certain that the new Director-General, who has demonstrated his personal and professional qualifications over a long career involving issues of international peace and security, will lend renewed dynamism to the organization and will see to it that the Technical Secretariat develops its work in constant consultation and understanding with all member States. We wish the Director-General and the entire staff of the Technical Secretariat resounding success in discharging their duties.

Allow me to conclude my statement by expressing the hope that the strides achieved in all the realms contemplated by the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction will continue to put an end to the threat posed by these terrible weapons of mass destruction to international peace and security.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Belarus, who will introduced draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.5.

Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus has submitted for consideration by the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.5, under agenda item 58, "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament". The delegation of the Republic of Belarus has the honour to inform the Committee and all delegations that, as of today, the draft resolution is also sponsored by Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The draft resolution proposes that the Conference on Disarmament be the main body for considering this issue. The adoption of the draft resolution would not have any financial implications. The text contains a reference to all previous General Assembly resolutions on the question of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. It also takes note of paragraph 77 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly and emphasizes the determination of Member States to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction that have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of weapons of mass destruction identified in the definition of weapons of mass destruction adopted by the United Nations in 1948.

In the operative part of the draft resolution, the Assembly would reaffirm that effective measures should be taken to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction. The General Assembly would further request the Conference on Disarmament, without prejudice to further overview of its agenda, to keep the matter under review as appropriate with a view to making, when necessary, recommendations on undertaking specific negotiations on identified types of such weapons. All States would be called upon to give favourable consideration to those recommendations of the Conference immediately following their submission.

The General Assembly would further request the Conference on Disarmament to report the results of any consideration of the matter in its annual reports to the General Assembly and would decide to include in the provisional agenda of its sixtieth session the item entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament".

Similar resolutions have twice, in 1996 and in 1999, been adopted by the General Assembly without a vote. The Republic of Belarus hopes that this draft resolution too will be supported by all delegations and will be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, I would like on behalf of the Chinese delegation

to express our serious concern at the grave explosions that have taken place in Bali and other areas of Indonesia. We would also like to express our deep condolences with respect to the heavy loss of life and the casualties among innocent people. We strongly condemn such violent acts.

I would like to put forward China's views on the prevention of the weaponization of outer space and of an arms race in outer space. One of mankind's greatest achievements in the twentieth century was the opening of a new frontier in outer space. Not only has its 1,000-year-old dream of space travel come true, but the quality of life has also been much improved by the new environment and unlimited resources provided by outer space. Industries related to global satellite remote sensing, telecommunication, navigation and global positioning are booming, with annual revenues reaching billions of dollars. Meteorological and geosurvey satellites are playing an important role in reducing or preventing natural disasters. Meanwhile, material and life science research in the space environment has a promising future. Outer space has already become a part of modern human civilization. In the twenty-first century, the importance of outer space to humanity will further increase.

However, while sharing the fruits of the peaceful uses of outer space and yearning for a better future, we are facing a series of great challenges. Research and development on space weapons and the unveiling of space combat theories, just to name a few issues, clearly indicate that outer space is facing an increasing danger of weaponization and an arms race. If the trend is not reversed, countries will soon be compelled to take measures to protect the security of their space assets and relevant ground facilities.

The peaceful use of outer space will also be more costly. Vulnerable satellites and manned spaceships will have to orbit a weaponized space, full of weapon debris. Efforts for peaceful uses of outer space will be slowed and fruitful achievements endangered. Future generations will have to live under a sword of Damocles and pay a high price in dealing with the non-proliferation, disarmament or reduction of outer space weapons.

Over the years, the international community has realized the severe consequences of the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space and has made unremitting efforts to codify and improve relevant international legal regimes as well as to regulate activities of States in outer space. We subsequently saw the conclusion of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, all of which have played a positive role in preventing the weaponization of outer space in recent decades by stopping the introduction of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space. Nevertheless, with the rapid development of space technology for military purposes, the shortcomings and loopholes of those legal instruments in relation to the prohibition of the deployment of weapons other than weapons of mass destruction and the use or threat of force against outer space objects have been gradually revealed as the weaponization of outer space increases. It has become clear that those instruments are not up to the task. It has been important for the international community to negotiate and conclude a legal instrument to halt the negative slide towards the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space.

As an important international arms control and disarmament forum, the First Committee has adopted more than 20 draft resolutions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In recent years, these draft resolutions have been adopted without negative votes. This clearly shows the paramount importance that the international community attaches to this issue and reflects the political will to address it. This year China will again sponsor the relevant draft resolution (A/C.1/57/L.30).

However, there is still a lack of progress in the implementation of these resolutions. It is particularly regrettable that, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, the Conference on Disarmament has yet to conduct substantive work on this subject, as requested by the relevant General Assembly resolutions. The international community has devoted much attention to finding ways to break the current stalemate on this item. We call on the international community to continue to focus on this important issue and to redouble its efforts to achieve a solution.

All along, China has advocated the use of outer space solely for peaceful purposes and has committed

itself to the common endeavour of preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. We believe that the relevant General Assembly resolutions should be implemented and that the Conference on Disarmament has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

In June of this year, China and the Russian Federation, together with Belarus, Indonesia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe, jointly submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a working paper entitled "Possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against other space objects" (CD/1679). The paper lays out our preliminary views on the general framework of such a legal instrument on outer space. The working paper has been circulated as an official document of the current session of the General Assembly (A/57/418).

In our view, in order to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space, the following basic obligations should be established as laid out in that document: not to place in orbit around the Earth any object carrying any kind of weapons, not to install such weapons on celestial bodies, or not to station such weapons in outer space in any other manner; not to resort to the threat or use of force against outer space objects; not to assist or encourage other States, groups of States or international organizations to participate in activities prohibited by the treaty. It should be pointed out that the aim of submitting this working paper is to implement resolutions on this item and to attain the goal of preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space through multilateral cooperation. We are pleased to note that there exists a broad common understanding on this objective. We are open to constructive comments and amendments, so as to further develop and improve the document.

Using outer space for peaceful purposes reflects the common will and fundamental interests of the international community. Preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space is in the interest of all countries and should be our common responsibility. Let us get the process under way by displaying political will and determination and striving for the early negotiation and conclusion of a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space and of the use of or threat of force against other outer space objects. We owe it to our future generations to keep space free from weapons and wars. Now we all should make a new contribution to that end.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Italy, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6.

Mr. Maiolini (Italy): At the outset, Sir, I would like to express on behalf of the Italian delegation our congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. We will support you in your endeavours and in your initiatives.

Allow me also to express the grief and condolences of the Italian Government with respect to the events in Indonesia.

As the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for it 2002 session and on behalf of the other sponsors, which are traditionally members of the expanded Bureau of the Commission, it is my distinct pleasure to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission". The draft resolution is a result of open-ended informal consultations among members of the Disarmament Commission. It has been prepared in a manner similar to that of previous resolutions regarding the Disarmament Commission, with appropriate changes in the text as this year's circumstances warranted. Those circumstances are well known to delegations, and I will not dwell on them. During the 2002 session, the Commission continued to be seized of two agenda items, both in their third year of consideration: ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament; and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. Accordingly, paragraph 5 reflects the present agenda of the Commission.

As delegations will remember, by resolution 56/26 A, dated 29 November 2001, the Commission was requested to hold sessions for a period not exceeding three weeks, in accordance with the 1998 decision on rationalization of the work of the Commission (decision 52/492). The 2000 session of the Disarmament Commission was reduced to two weeks due to the unusually busy disarmament calendar of that year. The 2001 substantive session was the first and only full three-week session held in accordance with the above-mentioned decision. At its 2002 session, due to extraordinary circumstances, the Commission decided to continue consideration of the two agenda

items at its next substantive session in 2003, from 31 March to 17 April. The present draft resolution, in its paragraph 6, reaffirms the normal practice of having a three-week substantive session of the Commission for 2003.

Now, allow me to say a few words about the activities of the Commission this year. As I mentioned earlier, the Commission held two organizational meetings and no substantive session. However, the Commission requested the Chairpersons of the two Working Groups to continue their intersessional consultations based on the discussions, suggestions and oral and written proposals and materials submitted during the previous two years of deliberations. The Commission also requested the two Chairpersons, if possible, to submit revised versions of their papers.

Let me say that it is not an easy task to try to maintain the perfect balance of deferring interests on issues, which go to the core of the security concepts. I am pleased to point out to the First Committee that during the two previous years, both Chairpersons met the challenge and presented papers which are considered a good basis for the final stages of further negotiations. I want to inform delegations that both Chairpersons are planning to conduct a series of consultations in the very near future.

In that context I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude to both Chairpersons for their valiant efforts. I wish also to express my hope that delegations will actively participate in those upcoming intersessional consultations and that they will make constructive contributions to them. I believe that I speak on behalf of all delegations when I express guarded optimism as to the future success of the Commission's deliberations during the forthcoming 2003 session. The previous session has laid down a solid foundation which makes the further consensus-building process focused and more target-oriented.

I hope that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6 will enjoy consensus support, as similar texts have in previous years.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Mexico, who will introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/57/L.4 and L.20 and draft decision A/C.1/57/L.19.

Mr. Albin Santos (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the sponsors of A/C.1/57/L.4, entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty". The sponsors, as of today, are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Nauru, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and Venezuela.

We have asked the Secretariat to issue a revised version of the draft to correct an unintentional omission: in the first preambular paragraph the words "or any other nuclear explosions" should be added after the words "test explosions". The point is to ensure consistency with article I of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The adoption of the Treaty six years ago was a reflection of the international community's clear recognition of the danger posed by nuclear tests. Completely banning them by impeding the development and qualitative improvement of new weapons is a step that significantly promotes international security and another step towards achieving nuclear disarmament. As members will note, the preamble reiterates the importance of the cessation of testing, recalls the adoption of the Treaty in 1996 and stresses the importance of achieving universality for this instrument. Even though the process of entry into force has been slower than we should have liked, the draft resolution indicates that the Assembly is encouraged by the progress made to date. It recalls as well resolution 55/41, adopted in 2000, and it welcomes the Final Declaration of the 2001 Conference on Measures to Facilitate the Entry into Force of the Treaty.

In the operative portion the draft stresses the importance and urgency of achieving the Treaty's entry into force. It welcomes contributions to the work of the Preparatory Committee. It urges States to maintain their moratoriums pending the entry into force of the Treaty. It urges all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty and to refrain from acts that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty, and in any event to assign high priority to this issue.

The sponsors trust that this draft resolution will send a clear-cut message from the United Nations about the Treaty and the importance of its early entry into force. We therefore hope that it will be adopted by a sweeping majority.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20, entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme", which I am introducing on behalf of the following sponsors: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines and South Africa. In its preambular part the text recalls the launching in 1982 of the World Disarmament Campaign and resolution 47/53 D of 1992, whereby it was decided that the Campaign should be known as the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme. The text refers to past resolutions on this item and to the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/223 and Add.1). In its operative part, the text takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General and commends the Secretary-General for his efforts to make effective use of the limited resources available, stresses the importance of the Programme and notes with appreciation the cooperation of the Department of Public Information. The text also puts forward recommendations for future work, invites Member States to make contributions to the Trust Fund and takes note of the recommendations made in the study on disarmament and non-proliferation education. As members will recall, a specific draft resolution on the latter item is contained in document A/C.1/57/L.7, which was introduced last week by Under-Secretary Miguel Marin-Bosch of Mexico. Finally, draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20 requests the Secretary-General to report on implementation of the activities of the Programme at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly and thus decides to include this item in the provisional agenda of the fifty-ninth session.

In the past, the Programme has had the backing of all the members of the Committee. The sponsors therefore trust that this draft resolution will enjoy general support and will therefore be adopted without a vote.

The delegation of Mexico would like finally to introduce draft decision A/C.1/57/L.19. It is self-explanatory. Our heads of State or Government have declared themselves in favour of convening a United Nations conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers in the context of nuclear disarmament. The delegation of Mexico has come to the conclusion that further consultations need to be held on this initiative and is therefore submitting this draft decision, by which the item would be included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session.

The Chairman: I call now on the representative of Malaysia, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.53.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.53, dated 10 October 2002, entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*". The draft resolution is sponsored by the following delegations: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Thailand, Tonga, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia and my own delegation, Malaysia. My delegation expresses its gratitude to all the sponsors, as well as those delegations that may later decide to sponsor or support the draft resolution.

This draft resolution is an updated version of the resolution adopted at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly: 15 out of its 17 preambular and four operative paragraphs are identical to those of resolution 56/24 S of 29 November 2001. The first word in the sixth preambular paragraph has been changed from "Welcoming" to "Emphasizing". We are of the view that it would be more appropriate for the unequivocal undertaking made in 2000 by States parties at the NPT Review Conference to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament be emphasized this year, as the Assembly had already welcomed it last year.

We have introduced two new preambular paragraphs, namely the ninth and fourteenth, to reflect important developments that have taken place since last year. The ninth preambular paragraph refers to the

signing by the United States of America and the Russian Federation of the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, better known as the Moscow Treaty, following the demise of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. We have taken note of the fact that the two major nuclear Powers have agreed to reduce the number of deployed intercontinental-range nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 for each country, from about 6,000. At the same time, we reiterate that this reduction could be complemented by further efforts on their part to ensure irreversibility.

Another important development was the convening in April of the first Preparatory Committee of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At the time that meeting was held, we learned of developments that could harm the commitment made by the nuclear-weapon States at the 2000 Review Conference to implement article VI of the NPT. The 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive effort to implement article VI of the NPT are vital to move the process forward towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Further developments that occurred after the holding of the Preparatory Committee meeting confirmed our concerns about the lack of progress in the implementation of the 13 steps. That sentiment was widely shared by delegates during the general debate in this Committee. In that regard, we believe that the fourteenth preambular paragraph summarizes the view of the international community concerning the implementation of those important 13 steps. It is our earnest hope that the commitments made at the 2000 Review Conference will continue to be honoured.

With regard to the operative paragraphs, we have retained the previous formulation, as we feel that the objectives of the paragraphs remain the cornerstone of the thrust of this resolution.

Operative paragraph 1

> "Underlines once again the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control".

In paragraph 2, we have omitted reference to a specific time or year for the commencement of multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention — without, however, compromising on the need for the prompt or immediate commencement of those negotiations. We believe that the responsibility of States to take action to reduce and eliminate nuclear threats posed by the existence of nuclear weapons is an immediate and urgent one, as reflected in this paragraph. Paragraph 2 now reads:

> "Calls once again upon all States immediately to fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and providing for their elimination".

Paragraphs 3 and 4 remain the same as those of resolution 56/24 S. Paragraph 3 requests the Secretary-General to apprise the General Assembly of information that he has received from States of the efforts and measures they have taken on the implementation of the resolution and nuclear disarmament, and paragraph 4 decides to include the item in the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The draft resolution does not pretend that paragraph 1 sets out the only conclusion of the Court that could influence disarmament policy or that there are no other actions that could be taken in the light of the Court's decision. The conclusion of the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice clearly stated that States parties to the NPT have a legal obligation not only to pursue negotiations but also to bring them to an early conclusion. That is consistent with the solemn obligation undertaken by States parties under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to pursue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and to engage in a determined pursuit of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, the ultimate goal being the elimination of those weapons.

The sponsors of the draft resolution consider the unanimous opinion of the world Court on the existence of this obligation as a clear basis for follow-up action by States Members of the United Nations in their determined efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons. The unanimous decision of the International Court of Justice, representing the full weight of the legal opinion of all members of the world Court, is an

important contribution to the development of international law, which should not be summarily dismissed. The Court, in arriving at its unanimous decision that Member States have an obligation not only to conduct but also successfully to conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, reiterates the obligation of States parties under article VI of the NPT.

In view of the many recent setbacks in the field of nuclear disarmament, the challenge facing the international community with respect to the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world remains a formidable one, requiring our total and unqualified commitment to the goals that we set ourselves. Our final goal must remain the elimination of all of these weapons within a time frame that is foreseeable, realistic and attainable, if the political will exists among the nuclear-weapon States. Towards that end, nuclear disarmament must remain a high-priority issue on the global agenda.

In submitting this draft resolution for the consideration of Member States, my delegation is confident that it will continue to receive the support of a large majority of Member States. We trust that States that support multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament that will eventually lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as we are committed to, will have no reason to oppose this draft resolution, which seeks to do exactly that in the long term. Once again, in introducing this draft resolution, my delegation expresses its sincere appreciation to the other sponsors as well as to delegations that will vote in favour.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Egypt, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.30.

Mr. Abu Zeid (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.30 entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". I do so on behalf of the following countries, all of which are sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, the Sudan and Zambia.

The draft resolution before the Committee this year differs little in substance from the similar resolution adopted by the General Assembly at the fifty-sixth session (resolution 56/23). This text sets out in its preamble the fundamentals of the legal framework for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space by all States in a manner that can provide States and their peoples with the prosperity they seek, without harm to their economic or scientific development, and in a spirit of respect by all States for the principles of the United Nations Charter. There is reference also to the obligation to renounce the use or threat of use of force and to prevent an arms race in outer space. The preamble emphasizes international efforts within the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and in the Conference on Disarmament, and emphasizes the importance of strengthening international efforts to conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements to that end. Moreover, the draft resolution calls for greater transparency regarding the peaceful use of outer space.

In the operative part, stress is placed on the need to strengthen negotiations to prevent an arms race in outer space. The text stresses the need to reinforce the legal regime and international law regarding the use of outer space, since the present provisions alone are not sufficient to prevent an arms race in outer space. The draft resolution calls upon States involved in the use of outer space to refrain from actions contrary to that objective. It invites the Conference on Disarmament to update the mandate contained in its decision of 13 February 1992 and to establish an ad hoc committee as early as possible during its 2003 session.

In submitting this draft resolution jointly with Sri Lanka, Egypt would like to state that it would have been impossible for my delegation to introduce this text without the intensive efforts made by the delegation of Sri Lanka throughout the past year in the First Committee and, with the most valuable assistance of Ambassador Prasad Kariyawasam, in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that the following Member States have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.4, Monaco; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.7, Monaco; draft

resolution A/C.1/57/L.25, Monaco, Mozambique and Nauru; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.30, Democratic People's Republic of Korea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.34, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea and Senegal; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.35, Bangladesh and the Republic of Korea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38, Guinea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Senegal and Sierra Leone; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.40, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.41, Italy; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.43, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.44, Nauru and Senegal; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.45, Papua New Guinea, Togo and Ukraine; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.46, Nauru and the Republic of Korea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.49, Georgia and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.50, Bangladesh; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.51, Bangladesh, Nauru and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.52, Papua New Guinea; and draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.53, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea.

Organization of work

The Chairman: I would like to inform members that this year a total of two draft decisions and 52 draft resolutions have been submitted to the Committee for its consideration under various items. In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the Committee will start taking action on these draft resolutions and decisions on Monday, 21 October 2002. A total of 10 meetings have been allocated for this next stage of our work, which will last until Tuesday, 29 October 2002.

In this connection, members will recall that at the organizational meeting of the First Committee I stated that I would follow the useful device of clustering draft resolutions, which has been evolved over the course of the past few years. It is my intention therefore to provide the Committee as soon as possible with a paper grouping together the draft resolutions in several clusters, with a view to facilitating the task of the Committee during the final stage, when it takes action on draft resolutions.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

United Nations A/C.1/57/PV.13

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

First Committee
13th meeting
Wednesday, 16 October 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Rivas (Colombia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

The Acting Chairman: In accordance with its programme of work and timetable, the Committee will continue with the second phase of its work: thematic discussion on item subjects and the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament-related international security agenda items.

Today, delegations are invited to make statements regarding conventional weapons, as well as to introduce draft resolutions.

Mr. Salander (Sweden): On behalf of all sponsoring delegations and my own delegation, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.46, on the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW). My delegation is grateful to all sponsoring countries for their support for that important draft resolution.

In December 2001, at the Second Review Conference of the States parties to the 1980 Convention, important progress was made in extending the scope of the Convention and its Protocols to include armed conflicts of a non-international character. We should like to take this opportunity to commend the Chairman of the Conference, Ambassador Les Luck of Australia, for his efforts to bring the Review Conference to a successful conclusion.

At the Review Conference, it was also decided that follow-up work should be commissioned, under the oversight of a Chairman-Designate, Ambassador Rakesh Sood of India, in the form of a meeting of States parties to the Convention to be held at Geneva on 12 and 13 December 2002. It was furthermore decided to establish an open-ended Group of Governmental Experts with two separate Coordinators: Ambassador Chris Sanders of the Netherlands, to lead the work on discussing ways and means to address the issue of explosive remnants of war, and Minister Peter Kolarov of Bulgaria, to explore further the issue of mines other than anti-personnel mines. The Review Conference also decided to ask the Chairman-Designate to undertake consultations on how to promote compliance with the Convention, and to invite interested States parties to convene a meeting of experts in order to consider possible issues related to small-calibre weapons and ammunition.

The draft resolution expresses support for the work conducted by the Chairman-Designate, by the two coordinators and by the Group of Governmental

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Experts. It also encourages further work with a view to submitting to the States parties recommendations on explosive remnants of war, as well as reports on mines other than anti-personnel mines and on compliance. Great efforts have already been put into all of this important work, and we hope for continued progress, resulting in a successful meeting of States parties on 12 and 13 December this year.

As there are no signs yet of a change in the worrisome trend of more civilians being afflicted by armed conflicts, the Convention and its Protocols remain a highly important and integral part of international humanitarian law.

The draft resolution before us calls upon all States to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols, and to adhere to its provisions, including the provision to extend the scope to include armed conflicts of a non-international character.

Sweden would like to express its support for further development of this instrument, in order to reach the humanitarian objective of limiting the suffering of civilians and combatants alike.

On behalf of all sponsors, I wish to express our sincere hope that the draft resolution will be adopted this year again without a vote.

Mr. Naidu (Fiji): As Chairman of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Group, I have asked for the floor today to make a statement on behalf of Australia, the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Fiji.

The tragic events of 11 September 2001 cast a pall over the work of the First Committee at the fifty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. One year later, the terrorist threat remains ever-present, as demonstrated by the recent tragic events in Bali. The Pacific Islands Forum Group extends its deepest condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to all countries that lost nationals in the Bali tragedy. In particular, the Group wishes to convey its most profound sympathies to the Government and people of Australia in their hour of grief over the loss of so many lives.

Preventing terrorist groups from gaining access to weapons, including small arms and light weapons, is a fundamental security challenge. More effective control over the spread and availability of small arms will help to bring safety and prosperity to the lives of innocent and vulnerable people and prevent terrorist groups from inflicting indiscriminate carnage.

The illicit trade in small arms has a destabilizing impact on security in the Pacific region. In our region, the possession of even a handful of unsophisticated weapons or ammunition in the wrong hands can result in civilians and communities being threatened and can affect the viability of democratically elected Governments. The importance of a safe and secure environment is crucial to the sustainable development of regional economies on a long-term basis.

The Pacific island countries are committed to putting effective controls in place, including national legislation and effective stockpile management procedures, to prevent illicit small arms flows. In this regard, the Pacific Islands Forum adopted the Nasonini Declaration in August 2002 to address regional security and governance challenges. This Declaration is contained in United Nations document A/57/331. In addition, the Forum is finalizing draft model legislation for a common approach to weapons control in the Pacific islands region. This will serve as the basis for the implementation and enforcement of effective national legislation in our region where it does not already exist.

It is over one year since Member States agreed by consensus to adopt the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Programme of Action provides a comprehensive and dynamic framework for Member States to follow in combating the illicit small arms trade at the national, regional and international levels. The international community must now focus on ensuring full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action, to which the Pacific Islands Forum countries are strongly committed and towards which they have already taken significant steps. In this respect, the Pacific Islands Forum Group welcomes again the tabling of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.33, entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", which gives essential backing to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

We are also pleased that, in 2003, Japan will host a small arms workshop for Pacific island countries.

Japan and Australia are coordinating closely to ensure that this workshop brings practical, tangible security and governance benefits to the Pacific islands region. Japan's workshop will build on the workshop hosted by Australia in 2001, which focused on the development of national legislation and the implementation of effective procedures to safeguard small arms stockpiles in regional countries.

The United Nations will continue to play a key role in overseeing the implementation of the Programme of Action, and in ensuring that its recommendations are carried out in the field. An example of a welcome proactive activity on the part of the United Nations in this area was the recent assessment mission to Papua New Guinea, led by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, which identified some practical steps to advance weapons disposal and to consolidate the peace process in Bougainville. Similarly, the Secretary-General's report on small arms represents a timely contribution to the international efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, usefully identifying ways in which the Security Council can help to control and eradicate illicit arms trade.

As identified in the report, through two areas in particular — inclusion of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) activities in peacekeeping mandates, and rigid reinforcement of the United Nations arms embargoes — the Council can make a practical and positive impact on international efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms.

In the lead-up to the biennial meeting on small arms in mid-2003, the Pacific Islands Forum countries urge Member States to renew their efforts to implement the United Nations Programme of Action. We must maintain a strong collective resolve to address effectively the governance, humanitarian and security dimensions of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Shaw (Australia): Australia fully endorses and associates itself with the statement on small arms delivered by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Group. We endorse, in particular, the statement's call for continued vigilance by the international community in addressing small arms problems and in implementing the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

We look forward to a productive first biennial meeting on the Programme of Action in July 2003. Australia is again pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolutions on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and on the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures.

Australia is fully committed to the target of achieving a landmine-free world. We are strong supporters of the Ottawa Convention, and we will continue to work actively in our region to build support for the Convention, with the aim of its eventual universalization.

Australia has been an active Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction, managed in Geneva as part of the Convention's intersessional process. We will show similar enthusiasm for our new role as a co-Rapporteur of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance. Australia is again pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Australia welcomes the positive progress made at the Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW), presided over by Australia in December 2001. In particular, the decision to establish an open-ended working group of governmental experts on explosive remnants of war and on mines other than anti-personnel mines will help to ensure that the CCW retains its vitality as a key element of multilateral disarmament machinery and of international humanitarian law. We are again pleased to co-sponsor the First Committee draft resolution on the CCW.

Transparency in armaments is a crucial element of efforts to build understanding and confidence in the field of conventional arms control. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, whose tenth anniversary was acknowledged in this Hall yesterday, is an important instrument in enhancing confidence and security at regional and international levels. Australia is a firm supporter of the Register, and calls on all States to submit annual returns to the United Nations.

We are again pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution on transparency in armaments.

Conventional weapons have been responsible for more injuries, deaths, economic hardship and political instability than any other class of weaponry. We must continue to give prominence to efforts to control and combat the adverse humanitarian, security and economic effects of those weapons.

Mr. Faessler (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to express the horror and sincere condolences of my country to the Governments whose citizens were the victims of the tragedy in Bali.

As I stated in my general statement, Switzerland would like briefly to revert to two topics related to conventional weapons: small arms and lights weapons and the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

My country attaches great importance to the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and welcomes the success of last year's United Nations Conference held in July on that issue and on the implementation of various regional arrangements, particularly within the context of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and in Latin America and Africa. The biennial meeting in 2003 will provide the first opportunity for reviewing progress made in implementing the Programme of Action.

France and Switzerland in particular took the initiative of studying the question of a tracing mechanism aimed at reducing uncontrolled flows of such weapons. We welcome the fact that a United Nations group of experts is studying the feasibility of drafting a legal instrument on the subject. For their part, France and Switzerland have been working to develop a political arrangement, one open to all interested States, to deal with the same matter. Thus, there are two parallel and complementary tracks to be explored simultaneously — the development of a legal instrument, if the United Nations group of experts deems that feasible, and the development of a political instrument, with participation on a voluntary basis.

The Franco-Swiss initiative is based on the Programme of Action, particularly its article 36. At the beginning of this year, we launched intensive consultations within a geographically balanced pilot group. It soon became clear that that process must be opened up in order to respond to the growing demands of transparency and universality. Accordingly, two information and consultation meetings, open to all Missions, took place at Geneva on 26 June and 28 September. I should like to inform members that another open-ended information and consultation meeting is to take place in New York at a date and time to be determined.

I also wish to quickly share my country's views regarding the process launched by the Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, held in December 2001 in Geneva. Members are aware of the importance Switzerland attaches to the role played by that Convention in the context of efforts to update international humanitarian law and adapt it to modern warfare, a role that is illustrated by its progressive extension to include new types of weapons. My country welcomes the outcome of the 2001 Review Conference, particularly the decision to amend the Convention in the context of applying all existing Protocols to non-international armed conflicts. My Swedish colleague already mentioned that issue.

While Switzerland regrets that that extension does not apply to the Protocols adopted after 1 January 2002, we, nonetheless, recognized that the fundamental rules of international humanitarian law must apply to all armed conflicts, as indeed is the case with other important international humanitarian treaties. My Government has set in motion the domestic ratification process, and it invites all States that have not yet done so to do likewise.

The Second Review Conference made another major decision by establishing, as my Swedish colleague also pointed out, a group of governmental experts to discuss means for addressing the problems of explosive remnants of war and landmines other than anti-personnel mines. The problem of explosive remnants of war is nothing new. They continue to take a toll among many people in various parts of the world. Above and beyond their tragic human costs, explosive remnants of war hamper the provision of humanitarian aid, slow down peacekeeping operations and impede the cultivation of agricultural land and reconstruction. That problem will most likely grow worse in the future, as technological development proceeds.

Submunitions are an important category of explosive remnants of war and must be treated as a priority. The number of accidents caused by unexploded submunitions to civilians has reached alarming levels. Almost three years ago, Switzerland submitted a proposal for international regulations on technical specifications aimed at preventing such submunitions from becoming explosive remnants of war. The goal of the initiative is to reduce the danger to which combatants and civilians alike are exposed during conflicts and after them, as well as to reduce the costs associated with removing explosive remnants of war, without, however, limiting the effectiveness of those weapons. Those measures are based on available and affordable technology that has already been introduced in some armed forces.

In the two meetings held by the Group of Governmental Experts in 2002 in Geneva, all participating States recognized that explosive remnants of war constitute an urgent humanitarian problem. My country hopes that, at the conclusion of the upcoming meeting of the Group of Experts in December 2002, it will be possible to adopt a broad mandate allowing for negotiations on general measures. I am thinking, for example, of the obligation to remove explosive remnants of war and of international cooperation and assistance, as well as of more specific, preventive measures, such as technical measures to reduce the number of categories of explosive remnants of war.

With respect to landmines other than anti-personnel mines, Switzerland is convinced that humanitarian imperatives require the regulation of this type of weapons, as well. My country supports the idea of carefully examining the sensitive detonation systems of anti-vehicle mines. My country also welcomes the fact that the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons encouraged States Parties to continue their efforts to consider the problems related to small-calibre weapons and ammunitions and to establish a verification mechanism for the Convention and its Protocols.

Finally, Switzerland attaches great importance to the universalization of Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices. In my capacity as Chairman of the Third Annual Conference of the States Parties to the Protocol, I sent a letter, in December 2001, to all States that have not yet acceded to the Protocol, inviting them to do so now. I take this opportunity today to renew that appeal.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): As in previous years, my delegation would like to take the floor to address the First Committee in support of draft resolution A/57/L.46, introduced by Sweden and co-sponsored by the Netherlands, on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. This Convention and its Protocols serve to reduce the unnecessary suffering of combatants, as well as of civilians. They are a major instrument of international humanitarian law that builds on the fundamental norm of law on armed conflict, which says that military necessities in armed conflict have to be balanced continually against the humanitarian objective of preventing unnecessary human suffering.

Over the last year, the Group of Governmental Experts of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has considered, inter alia, measures to address the issue of explosive remnants of war. The number of human casualties caused by unexploded munitions after the end of a conflict is staggering. That number is of at least the same magnitude as the number of casualties caused by landmines. Yet, there is no instrument to deal with this grave problem. The humanitarian urgency has been recognized by all States Parties to the CCW.

As Coordinator for the very complex issue of explosive remnants of war, I would like to express my satisfaction with the work that we have done in the course of this year, and I want to thank the delegations of the States Parties to the CCW for their constructive attitude and their substantive contribution to the discussions in the Group of Experts.

I am now preparing for the December session of the Group of Experts, and I have circulated a draft proposal on possible further work. That draft proposal reflects my personal view and is, of course, only a first idea on the way forward. I hope that we can achieve the necessary degree of convergence in December and agree, on the basis of consensus, on how to proceed. I welcome any comments delegations may have, either here in New York or in Geneva.

It is not my intention to focus the December session of the Group of Experts exclusively on my proposal. On the contrary, I very much wish that the major part of the time available be dedicated to the study and discussion of substantive issues. To promote

this, I have invited several States Parties and organizations to make presentations on relevant aspects of explosive remnants of war.

I would like to conclude by stressing the importance of the further universalization of, and adherence to, the Convention and its Protocols. We therefore join Sweden and others in expressing the wish that this draft resolution be adopted without a vote.

Mrs. Raholinirina (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): Since I am taking the floor for the first time in the Committee, my delegation would like to join previous speakers in warmly congratulating our Chairman on being elected to guide our work. We wish him every success in fulfilling his mandate and assure him of our complete cooperation. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to offer its sincere condolences to the countries affected by the barbarous attacks in Bali.

The illicit traffic in small arms in all its aspects continues to be a very topical issue because of its humanitarian consequences and its impact on security and development. The recent public meeting of the Security Council on this issue demonstrates the international community's growing concern at this scourge, which is a complex and multifaceted challenge to international peace and security.

Rather than being reduced in number, enormous quantities of small arms are still in circulation and kill at least 500,000 people a year. Apart from conflict situations, exacerbated by the ease with which such arms are acquired and modified, we are also witnessing an increase in crime, which is a threat to public security and to the stability of Governments.

The destabilizing and destructive effects of small arms and their link to drug trafficking and terrorism and the illegal exploitation of natural resources mean that we need greater mobilization by the international community to halt the proliferation of such weapons.

Madagascar believes that the Programme of Action adopted by consensus in July 2001 in New York is an important landmark in international action to combat this phenomenon to the extent that it covers national, regional and global strategies in the context of international cooperation. In this respect Madagascar welcomes the creation in April 2002 of a working group, including the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Department of Public Information and the World Health Organization, with a view to improving coordinated action on small arms. We also support the establishment of advisory services on small arms within the Department for Disarmament Affairs with a view to helping Member States to attain the objectives of the Programme of Action.

Success in this joint endeavour will depend on rapid and effective implementation of the programme of action and the genuine determination by the international community to eradicate illicit trafficking in small arms. Madagascar hopes that the biennial meeting planned for 2003 will enable preparations for the review conference in 2006 and that questions of vital importance for peace and security, such as the holding of weapons by individuals and the transfer of weapons to non-State entities, will be considered in greater detail.

As everyone knows, this sort of transaction is of major importance in the continuance and proliferation of conflicts, particularly in Africa. We also hope that the meeting will seriously address the vital financial resources for the implementation of measures set out in the Programme of Action. Moreover, Madagascar believes that the problem of illicit trafficking in small arms should be looked at at its very source, that is at the level of producers and importers. My delegation firmly believes that the scourge of proliferation of small arms can be eliminated only with genuine cooperation by the major actors involved.

Here we are concerned to note that 98 countries have arms industries and only 22 of them publish information on their sales and exports. Efforts to eradicate small arms must be supported by greater transparency in weapons markets. Accordingly, Madagascar supports the establishment of an international instrument on the identification of supply channels and on the traceability of small weapons. Until there is a consensus on this matter, we believe it necessary for exporting countries to take appropriate measures to ensure effective controls over exports and transit of small arms.

Still in the context of measures to be taken, Madagascar endorses the idea of strengthening interaction between the Security Council and the

General Assembly on matters relating to small arms with a view to promoting long-term strategies.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that the question of small arms will benefit from the same attention as that accorded to other weapons of mass destruction. It is the duty of all of us to prevent this scourge from continuing to take so many human lives and wipe out so many years of development effort.

Ms. Saiga (Japan): I have asked to take the floor in order to present draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.33 on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, on behalf of Colombia, South Africa and another 105 countries, which as of today have joined Japan in sponsoring this draft resolution.

Japan has been tackling issues related to small arms and light weapons since 1995, when we proposed the first small-arms resolution to the General Assembly, which eventually led to the convening of the first United Nations Conference in July 2001. The Programme of Action adopted by consensus at that conference was a historic achievement representing the collective will of the international community to address the serious problems caused by these weapons. Last year's resolution describes a path that must be taken to meet the new challenges, paving the way for a meeting to follow up this Programme of Action. This year, Japan hopes that further steps will be taken with draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.33. I would like, if I may, to explain some of its salient points.

First, with this draft resolution, we hope that venue and timing of the first two biennial meetings that are stipulated in the Programme of Action will be decided. In a series of consultations with many delegations in Geneva and here in New York, we have observed that the majority of the delegations prefer to hold this meeting in New York in July 2003. This majority view is reflected in this draft resolution. We all should work to ensure that the biennial meeting will provide the opportunity for fruitful consideration of the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and global levels.

Secondly, in accordance with last year's resolution, the Group of Governmental Experts was established to assist the Secretary-General in undertaking a study to examine the feasibility of developing an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons. The Group convened its first meeting in July. In this draft resolution we welcome the Group's establishment and express hope that it will produce meaningful results.

Thirdly, in order to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons, we would like to invite States to express their views on further steps that could be taken. Due to the difficult nature of this problem and the divergence of views on it, we consider that this is the most reasonable and practical approach.

Looking ahead to the first biennial meeting we would like to note with appreciation the active contribution that States, international regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society have made in the implementation of the Programme of Action. We encourage them to take further initiatives to promote implementation at all levels.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that this draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Reyes (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to express my most profound sentiments of condolence and solidarity with the Government of Indonesia on behalf of the Government of Colombia and on my own behalf. We feel their grief as if it were our own. Speaking on behalf of Japan, South Africa and Colombia, the representative of Japan just presented draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.33 entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects". It is my honour to introduce that draft now. The Government of Colombia should like once again to voice its satisfaction at the number of sponsors that have, this year again, endorsed the draft resolution just presented by the representative of Japan.

The support of these countries for the draft resolution reaffirms and demonstrates the determination of the international community — already reflected in the adoption of the Programme of the Action of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects — to give this problem the priority it deserves on the international agenda and to shoulder the responsibilities involved in beginning to resolve it.

In the past year, political support has been consolidated for dealing with the question of small arms and light weapons, and numerous activities have

been undertaken at the local, national and regional levels. It has been highly encouraging to note, and to participate in, meetings aimed at the practical implementation of the Programme of Action. Meetings were held in Brussels; Geneva; Santiago de Chile; San Jose, Costa Rica; Vevey, Switzerland; Tokyo; Zagreb; Pretoria; and Windhoek, to name just a few.

We have also seen initiatives on specific aspects of the Programme of Action, such as marking or the exchange of information and experiences. At times these initiatives have been undertaken by States, at other times by non-governmental organizations, and often both have worked together with the United Nations and or its agencies.

Given that the problem of small arms and light weapons adversely affects various regions of the world in different ways, the myriad activities being undertaken at the national and regional levels reflect the diversity of the efforts being made to address various facets of the problem. The work to which the Conference has given rise is tremendously useful in terms of enhancing the security of citizens, democratic security and international security.

Beyond that, it is imperative that we acknowledge and promote the invaluable work being done by non-governmental organizations in implementing the Programme of Action.

With respect to the question of small arms in the context of the United Nations, it would be difficult to come up with a better illustration of partnership among States, civil society, non-governmental organizations and international agencies. I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to stress how important it is that the various States take the necessary measures to implement the Programme of Action. I am aware that this has been said a number of times over, but the designation of a focal point and the elaboration of a national plan are key measures for implementing the Programme.

I should like to express my thanks for, and to highlight, the work being done by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the ambitious and comprehensive vision that is guiding the work of our delegations. Finally, I should like once again to stress the importance of keeping intact the political momentum that was created a year ago in order effectively to address the problem of small arms and light weapons, and, in this context, the need to contribute constructively and imaginatively to preparations for, and to the successful holding of, the conference to be held next year.

Ms. Notutela (South Africa): At the outset, may I, on behalf of the South African delegation, thank the delegation of Japan, and especially Ambassador Kuniko Inoguchi, for all of their dedicated work in preparing this year's draft resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Japan is assuming an important leadership role in this issue at a time when key developments in the context of the Programme of Action will soon take place — in 2003. Japan can count on the full support of South Africa in this regard.

The Programme of Action adopted at the 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspect is the only multilaterally negotiated and politically binding Programme of Action that provides a framework to guide our collective efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate this illicit trade.

The commitment shown by States and by regional and non-governmental organizations in implementing the politically binding undertakings made in terms of the Programme of Action is a positive step in the right direction to eradicate this illicit trade.

South Africa also wishes to express its appreciation for the efforts of the Department for Disarmament Affairs to support the implementation of the Programme of Action.

South Africa believes that the main objective of this draft resolution is to identify those issues in the Programme of Action on which we need to take specific action at this session of the General Assembly. In addition, a generic reference is necessary to emphasize the need for the early and full implementation of the Programme of Action as well as to encourage the mobilization of resources and expertise to promote its implementation.

In preparing this draft resolution, Japan has, in our view, correctly identified those additional issues on which we need to focus our attention in the coming year, namely the first of the two biennial meetings, brokering, information-sharing and the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing.

The first biennial meeting of States has as its objective to consider the national, regional and global implementation of the Programme of Action. South Africa believes that the main aim of this meeting is therefore to share information on the progress made, or not made, in the implementation of the Programme of Action. It would also be useful for regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to utilize this opportunity to share information on their efforts to combat this illicit trade.

South Africa further wishes to express its appreciation to Ambassador Rakesh Sood of India for the very competent manner in which he is chairing the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons is a vital link in our collective effort to eradicate this illicit trade, and Ambassador Sood can count on South Africa's support in his efforts to produce a useful study.

In conclusion, we have only begun to address this problem, and it is therefore important to share information on what is being done to prevent and combat this illicit trade. South Africa would like to urge those that have not yet done so to submit their national reports on small arms. These reports are an important tool to enable the international community to verify the extent of the problem and to determine where there is a need to provide relevant assistance and undertake cooperative initiatives.

Mr. Arih (Slovenia): Mr. Chairman, since this is Slovenia's first national statement at this year's session of the First Committee, allow me to extend to you and to other members of the Bureau our sincere congratulations on your election. Let me assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation in the fulfilment of the responsibilities entrusted to you.

I should like also to extend, on behalf of my Government, sincere condolences to the people of Indonesia and to all of those countries whose citizens were victims of the terrible terrorist attack on Bali.

Slovenia fully supports the efforts of the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Stability Pact and other regional and subregional organizations to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Slovenia is also an active member of the Human Security Network, which attaches particular importance to the question of the threat to human security posed by the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

We would like to express our strong support for the proposal made by the Secretary-General in his report on small arms for the development of international mechanisms for identifying and tracing small arms and monitoring embargoes and sanctions. The establishment of such mechanisms is one of the preconditions for more effective action in the field of combating the illicit trade in these weapons.

Since 1990, 4 million men, women and children — thousands of them in our region — have been caught in the crossfire of small arms and light weapons and perished in killing fields all over the globe. A great number of such weapons are still illegally in the possession of individuals in many countries of the region of South-East Europe. Slovenia is deeply concerned about that fact and is very interested in taking prompt action at all levels — global, regional, subregional and national — to combat the destructive consequences of the use of those weapons.

As a follow-up to the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and in implementation of its Programme of Action, I would like to inform the Committee that Slovenia will, together with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, organize a regional conference, to take place in our country in the first half of next year.

Slovenia is committed to strengthening peace and security in South-East Europe, and we hope that that conference will enhance the process of achieving closer regional and subregional cooperation in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and marking and tracing such weapons and controlling their import and export, as well as in the areas of weapons collection and destruction, sharing information and ensuring cooperation with civil society. We are firmly convinced that we can solve the global problem with effective cooperation at the regional and subregional levels.

In conclusion, I should like to express Slovenia's gratitude to the delegations of Japan, Colombia and South Africa for preparing a very comprehensive draft

resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, and to the delegation of Mali for preparing the draft resolution on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them. Slovenia will be glad to co-sponsor both of those draft resolutions.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): I have asked for the floor to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.41, entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels". I do so on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Belarus, Germany, Italy, Nepal, Peru, Ukraine and my own country.

The draft resolution aims to promote disarmament endeavours in an area that has not so far received due attention in the multilateral disarmament forums, namely, the pursuit of conventional disarmament at the regional and subregional levels.

In its preambular part, draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.41 outlines several vital principles and precepts relating to the issue — that is, that arms control plays a pivotal role in promoting peace and security; that in the post-cold-war era threats to peace arise primarily among States located in the same region or subregion; that the preservation of a balance in the defence capabilities of States at the lowest level of armaments would contribute to peace and stability; that agreements to strengthen peace and security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces is a desirable objective; that militarily significant States and States with larger military capabilities have a special responsibility in promoting such agreements for regional peace and security; and that an important objective should be to prevent the possibility of military attacks launched by surprise and to avoid aggression.

The preambular part of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.41 also notes with particular interest the initiatives taken in various regions, including those by a number of Latin American countries, and the proposals for conventional arms control in South Asia, and recognizes the relevance and value of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which has rightly been proclaimed as the cornerstone of European security.

In its operative part, the draft resolution, while deciding to give urgent consideration to the issue of conventional disarmament at the regional and subregional levels, requests the Conference on Disarmament to consider formulating principles that can serve as the framework for regional agreements. It also requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and submit a report to the next session of the General Assembly.

The draft resolution encapsulates unexceptionable and universally recognized principles, adherence to which could prove instrumental in advancing the cause of peace, particularly in the troubled regions of the world.

The sponsors therefore express the hope that the draft resolution will be adopted without any objection.

Mr. Mourao (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): Small arms and light weapons are not by nature weapons of mass destruction, but the degree to which such weapons proliferate places them in that category. Suffice it to say that an enormous number — almost 0.5 million people — are victims of such weapons every year.

In the countries members of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, as well as in the associated States, Bolivia and Chile — on behalf of which I have the honour to take the floor — the illicit traffic in small arms is a threat to public security. Combating the illicit trade in such weapons is one of the priorities of our countries, as we demonstrated through our active participation in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held here last year, and in drawing up the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials.

In this connection, MERCOSUR looks forward, at the global level, to seeing the Programme of Action, adopted at last year's Conference, receive the broadest possible support. Although the Programme of Action may be less ambitious than we had hoped, we consider that its provisions constitute an important framework for activities to deal with the problem of the illicit traffic in small arms and to move forward in various domains. Experience- and information-sharing at the international level will make that possible, and we hope that we will be able to agree on general criteria, so as to make progress with regard to such activities.

The 2001 Conference initiated collective action in which MERCOSUR is taking an active part. Likewise,

we trust that the international community will take advantage of the meetings planned for 2003 and 2005 to ensure coordination and the exchange of information, so that the 2006 Review Conference will produce encouraging results and further expand the scope of action.

At the regional level, the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials provides a legal framework for the countries of the Americas, including those in MERCOSUR, to implement a number of provisions in the Programme of Action of the United Nations Conference. In this regard, we are making efforts to ensure their effective application and, as a signal of our commitment to that cause, all States members of MERCOSUR are carrying out programmes for the destruction of small arms.

Also at the subregional level, our countries are making progress towards the creation of a shared register of vendors and purchasers of firearms, parts and munitions and towards a MERCOSUR system of security information exchange aimed, inter alia, at standardizing criteria. We believe that the subregional level is the natural and primary context for action. Given the high degree of convergence in national legislation, we have been able to establish a working group on firearms and munitions, the second meeting of which was held in March in Buenos Aires.

These subregional initiatives have allowed MERCOSUR to strengthen its action on the register of physical individuals and legal entities involved in such trafficking; authorized points of embarkation and arrival; an instantaneous online monitoring network; and the harmonization of national legislation in this field. We also wish to point out that the network of non-governmental organizations established last year has proved to be an efficient and effective tool in educating the population on the great scope of the problem of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

Despite MERCOSUR's success in some areas, we believe that much remains to be done, and not only in the subregional context. To that end, we believe that particular priority should be attached to all measures to trace weapons, the identification of routes of illicit trafficking and brokering and the search for supply routes, which can be coordinated at the international level. We support the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Small Arms and Light Weapons and look forward to the adoption of an international instrument permitting international cooperation in the disruption of illicit trafficking routes. We believe it necessary to initiate a study on illicit brokering and on how to advance in controlling such activities.

These efforts should be carried out in the context of the United Nations, the only forum capable of ensuring the legitimacy, universality and efficacy of measures to combat such trafficking. Similarly, we are certain that, in an area of such importance to the security of so many States, such measures should be of a juridical nature. We should not forget that national and subregional efforts must be strengthened by collective global action involving State and non-State actors, international and non-governmental organizations and civil society. Only thus can we be sure of moving in the right direction.

Mr. Lint (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): It is a pleasure to see you presiding over this meeting, Sir. I assure you of the full cooperation of Belgium.

I take the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction", in my capacity as Chairman of the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, and on behalf of Nicaragua, Chairman of the Third Meeting, and of Thailand, the future Chairman of the Fifth Meeting.

Since last year's session of the First Committee, anti-personnel mines have claimed an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 new victims. There is thus an urgent need to address this humanitarian problem effectively. That is why, in the preamble of the draft resolution, we reaffirm our determination to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines. We believe it necessary to do the utmost in removing those cowardly and lethal weapons, assuring their destruction and ensuring assistance for the care and rehabilitation, including the social and economic reintegration, of mine victims.

We welcome the entry into force, on 1 March 1999, of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel

Mines and on Their Destruction, and note with satisfaction the work undertaken to implement it.

Having recalled the Meetings of the States Parties at Maputo, Geneva and Managua, we have added a paragraph recalling the Fourth Meeting held at Geneva from 16 to 20 September 2002, and the Declaration of the Fourth Meeting reaffirming the commitment of the States Parties to further intensify their efforts in those areas most directly related to the core humanitarian objectives of the Convention.

We note with satisfaction that additional States have ratified or acceded to the Convention. Indeed, since the Managua Meeting last year, nine States have joined the Convention. In chronological order, they are Nigeria, Algeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Suriname, Afghanistan, Cameroon, the Union of the Comoros and Gambia. I wish to congratulate them here. The total number of States that have formally accepted the obligations of the Convention is now 129. They will soon number 130, following the imminent deposit by the Central African Republic of its instrument of accession. Moreover, 16 States have signed but not yet ratified the Convention.

We emphasize the desirability of attracting the adherence of all States to the Convention and are determined to work strenuously towards the promotion of its universalization. In that respect, the regional approach has proven to be useful in some parts of the world, such as Africa and Latin America, and could prove useful elsewhere.

Finally, we note with regret that anti-personnel mines continue to be used in conflicts around the world, causing human suffering and impeding post-conflict development.

Operative paragraph 1 invites States that have not signed the Convention to accede to it without delay. Universality is one of the major objectives of the Convention. In this context, I urge the 49 States that have not signed the Convention to accede to it as soon as possible. I wish here to highlight the co-sponsorship of countries that have not yet acceded, such as Papua New Guinea, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Tonga and Tuvalu, as well as the declaration of Nepal and that of Turkey, reaffirming its intention to deposit its instrument of accession on the same date as Greece, which ratified nationally last March. I also wish to thank Switzerland and Timor-Leste for their first co-sponsorships and take this opportunity to welcome them to the United Nations.

Paragraph 2 urges the States that have signed but not ratified the Convention to ratify it without delay. The fact that the majority of signatories are sponsoring our draft resolution is an encouraging signal. However, it is also important that the Convention be fully and effectively implemented and complied with, as stressed in paragraph 3. In this regard, the Fourth Meeting of States Parties recalled that the four-year schedule for the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines will lapse in less than five months for States that become parties in March 1999.

In paragraph 4, we recall the obligation prescribed in article 7 of the Convention to provide the Secretary-General with reports on transparency. Currently, more than 80 per cent of States parties have complied with this requirement and it is essential that those which have not yet done so submit such reports as soon as possible.

Paragraph 5 invites States that have signed but not ratified the Convention or acceded to it to provide, on a voluntary basis, information to make global mine action efforts more effective.

Paragraph 6 renews the call upon all States and other relevant parties to work together to promote the care, rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of mine victims, mine-risk education programmes and the removal of anti-personnel mines placed throughout the world and the assurance of their destruction.

Paragraph 7 invites and encourages all interested States, the United Nations, other relevant international organizations or institutions, regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and relevant non-governmental organizations to participate in the programme of intersessional work. That programme makes it possible to carry out exchanges in an informal setting between States parties and States not yet part of the Convention, as well as between States and civil society.

Paragraph 8, which has been amended from the previous year, requests the Secretary-General to undertake the preparations necessary to convene the Fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention at Bangkok from 15 to 19 September 2003. In that regard,

I would like to thank the Thai authorities for offering to hold the Conference in their country.

Our draft resolution is currently supported by 120 sponsors, representing all regional groups. This is a remarkable achievement that reflects the spirit of the Convention with regard to openness and cooperation between mine-affected countries and States prepared to help them, as well as between Governments and non-governmental organizations.

It is in that spirit that we would like to secure the co-sponsorship of all States parties and signatories to the Convention, as well as the support of the largest number of States possible that have not acceded to the Convention but that will soon do so.

Mr. Mourao (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): Although the fact that 129 States have either ratified or acceded to the Ottawa Convention is a very clear signal of the determination of the international community to end the scourge of anti-personnel mines, this is still not enough — just as all that can be said about the enormous damage these weapons cause is also not enough.

In 1996, the member countries of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, and the associated States of Bolivia and Chile, on whose behalf I have the honour to speak — joined their determination with that of the vast majority of people across Latin America to fight against this type of weapon. That determination coalesced at the Organization of American States, which, in resolutions of its General Assembly, has repeatedly declared the Western Hemisphere a zone free from anti-personnel landmines. In 1997, MERCOSUR once again expressed its position clearly by signing the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. In 1998, the heads of State of MERCOSUR and its associated States turned their desire into commitment at Ushuaia, Argentina, by declaring this region a zone of peace free of weapons of mass destruction and by deciding to take every step necessary to ensure the total elimination of anti-personnel mines, among other things. In 2001, MERCOSUR's six member countries completed their ratifications of the Convention, thereby making themselves parties to the Ottawa Convention. Since then, national legislatures began the process of harmonizing their laws in order to enact the provisions of the Convention and to deal with the destruction of landmine arsenals within their respective jurisdictions. We believe that this chronological summary of events is a reflection of the fact that our subregion has the authority to call on all countries that have not yet done so to accede to this initiative, especially countries in which the majority of such weapons are manufactured.

The destruction of landmines in the subregion goes hand-in-hand with the cooperation that is part of the mine-removal efforts on the part of several countries in our subregion in the context of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Mine-removal work continues to be among the most important tasks in the post-conflict rebuilding process of societies. We must not forget that these weapons, whose potential to inflict damage goes beyond the formal end of any conflict, continue to have long-term devastating effects, particularly among such vulnerable groups as women and children. The violation of international humanitarian law that landmines represent speaks for itself, given that every year 15,000 new victims are added to the hundreds of thousands of persons who are living with the consequences of having been exposed to these weapons.

We therefore call for increased cooperation in the areas of mine removal and assistance. MERCOSUR believes that, although it was intended to provide transparency in the implementation of the Convention's provisions, article 7 can in fact be used as a basis for measuring progress and providing information about the needs of affected States, which today number 50. This approach would also make it possible for us to focus cooperation efforts more effectively, particularly that of donor countries. We trust that the number of States supporting such activities will grow in order to improve security conditions for development in an environment free from the dangers posed by anti-personnel mines. The humanitarian ramifications of this problem continue to be a priority for MERCOSUR. We will therefore continue to cooperate with others as much as we can on the basis of the experience we have acquired.

The Fourth Meeting of States Parties, which was held just a few weeks ago at Geneva, made it possible for us to see the progress that has been made. The Meeting also revealed the increased participation by affected populations in programmes and activities, as well as the fact that mine stockpiles have been destroyed and increased resources have been dedicated

to widening the scope of the task ahead. All of that is particularly encouraging. However, the entire international community must, without exception, participate in the Convention if this progress is to have real meaning and the subregional, regional and global efforts being made are to meet the overall goal of the total elimination of these weapons in order to guarantee the right of peoples to a secure life.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): Norway has the privilege of co-sponsoring several of the draft resolutions introduced today, including draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.33 on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36 on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.46 on the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. Likewise, we are also a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.25 on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them. These draft resolutions are an important part of our disarmament agenda as regards conventional weapons.

At the same time, all these draft resolutions also have a clear humanitarian perspective. Norway regards the spread of illicit small arms and light weapons as a global threat to human security, human rights and international humanitarian law. Illicit small arms undermine peace-building and conflict-prevention. The United Nations Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons provides us with a good starting point for intensifying our efforts to deal with a the problem of illicit small arms and light weapons.

We now need to ensure full implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels. In that respect, we need a broad mobilization of Governments, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the United Nations family and regional organizations in follow-up activities. Norway stands ready to contribute both politically and financially.

We are pleased to see a number of ongoing activities at the national and regional levels. Important work has been carried out in the field of tracing and marking. We agree that more needs to be done in the area of illicit brokering. We are convinced that the biennial meetings in 2003 and in 2005 will provide with an opportunity to share information and thus take stock of where we stand in relation to t implementation of the Programme of Action. We al regard those two meetings as important events for t preparation of the 2006 Conference. We hope that t two resolutions on small arms and light weapons w be adopted by consensus.

The Ottawa Mine Ban Convention is an examp of a multilateral process that is working well. Since t Convention was signed nearly five years ago, we ha witnessed important progress in that field. The use anti-personnel mines is decreasing, more mine-affect fields are being cleared and, most important, there h been a significant decline in the number of mi victims. The Convention has established a norm that working beyond its membership.

Despite those achievements, we cannot complacent. Anti-personnel mines are still being use Too many people are still being injured by mine Norway, therefore, fully concurs with the decision the most recent meeting of the States parties to t Mine Ban Convention to further intensify efforts in t areas most directly related to the core humanitari objectives of the Convention. To that end, we ne continued political and financial commitment, as w as further consolidation of the partnership amo Governments and between Governments and civ society. We call upon all Member countries to suppo draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, introduced by Belgiu Nicaragua and Thailand.

Norway fully supports draft resoluti A/C.1/57/L.46, introduced by Sweden. We welcon the outcome of the Second Review Conference States Parties to the Convention on Certa Conventional Weapons. We were greatly encourag that the Review Conference decided to extend t scope of the Convention and, by consensus, to set an expert group to consider a mandate for negotiati of a protocol to the CCW on explosive remnants war. We hope that it will be possible to rea agreement by the end of the year on a mandate f negotiating such a legally binding instrument. I shou like to add that Norway supports efforts to bet address the humanitarian challenges posed by an vehicle mines. We hope that the draft resolution on t CCW can be adopted without a vote.

Finally, I should like to underline the importance of transparency in armaments and conventional weapons, as well as of practical disarmament measures for the consolidation of peace. Norway thus supports and is sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, to be introduced by the Netherlands, and draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.45, to be introduced by Germany.

Mr. Kahende (Kenya): I take the floor in support of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, on implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Anti-personnel mines remain a scourge in many parts of the world. Thousands of civilians are either maimed or killed by them each year. Entire communities are deprived of the means to a decent livelihood because productive land has been mined. As the world strives to eradicate poverty, to achieve sustainable development and to assist countries emerging from conflict, it should be recognized that there are countries in great need of assistance in mine clearance, especially in Africa.

Kenya remains fully committed to fulfilling its obligations as a State party to the Mine Ban Convention. In the past year, Kenya has actively participated in various activities related to the Convention, especially in the intersessional meetings, where it served as Co-Rapporteur of the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Awareness and Mine Action Technologies. In the coming year and in the run-up to the Fifth Meeting of the States Parties, Kenya will be Co-Chair of that Committee, which has been renamed the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine-Risk Education and Mine Action Technologies.

In fulfilling its obligations under the Convention, Kenya submitted its initial report in accordance with Article 7 in December 2001 and its first annual report in April 2002. At the regional level, my country is involved in demining operations in the Horn of Africa, under the auspices of the United Nations peacekeeping mission along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border. We believe that the Convention is a comprehensive instrument. If adhered to and fully implemented, it could significantly alleviate much suffering. My delegation would, therefore, like to underscore the need for all delegations to sponsor the draft resolution before us.

Kenya is pleased to be one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, on implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. As the draft resolution points out, mines are still used in conflicts, thus causing untold suffering and, above all, hindering post-conflict development. In that regard, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to Ambassador Jean Lint, not only for presenting the draft resolution, but also for his very laudable efforts to secure such a high number of sponsors.

Ms. Yamali (Thailand): At the outset, on behalf of the delegation of Thailand, I should like to express our deep condolences to the Government and the peoples of Indonesia, especially to the civilians who are suffering as a result of the tragic incident in Bali.

Thailand would like to associate itself with the statement made previously by the delegation of Belgium addressing landmine problems and introducing the draft resolution on implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, contained in document A/C.1/57/L.36. My delegation would also like to express its gratitude and appreciation to the delegation of Belgium for drafting the text of the draft resolution.

Thailand attaches great importance to landmine-related problems. We are aware of the devastation caused by anti-personnel mines and of the needs of landmine victims, of whom there are many in my own country, in the South-East Asian region and throughout the world. Thailand is of the view that the Ottawa Convention is a significant tool for the world community in eradicating landmines and in preventing further landmine casualties.

We also welcome the success of the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention. Through their efforts and dedication — together with the able leadership of Ambassador Jean Lint of Belgium — the participating countries achieved fruitful outcomes and renewed their commitment under the Convention to meeting its humanitarian objective of ridding the world of landmines.

For its part, Thailand has shown its full commitment to the implementation of the Convention, as well as to its universalization.

During the past year, Thailand organized several regional seminars with the objective of building momentum in our region. Next year, as endorsed by the Fourth Meeting of States Parties, Thailand will host a Fifth Meeting of States Parties at Bangkok in September. We hope to take this opportunity to increase awareness of landmine problems in the Asia-Pacific region, where there are many landmines still in place.

In this connection, Thailand has co-sponsored this draft resolution since it was first introduced, and we will continue to do so. My delegation would also like to encourage all countries to join our effort in making our world free of landmines. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Yugoslavia, which are not States Parties to the Convention, for their sponsorship of this draft resolution.

On behalf of all sponsors, I wish to express our sincere hope that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36 on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction will receive wide support this year.

Mr. Zewdie (Ethiopia): Since this is the first time I am taking the floor, I wish to express my congratulations to all members of the Bureau on their election at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. I would also like to assure the Chairman of the best possible cooperation of my delegation in his discharge of his responsibilities.

First and foremost, we would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for its unreserved efforts to implement resolution 56/24 B. My delegation welcomes the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts to examine the feasibility of developing an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. It is also encouraging to see in the report of the Secretary-General on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, as contained in document A/57/160, that a number of Member States have cooperated in replying to the request made by the Secretariat on this subject. My country has also reacted positively and promptly to that request. As reflected in Annex II of the report, Ethiopia has taken steps to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. As a first step, my country has designated the Federal Police Commission as the National Coordinating Authority and focal point for the implementation of the Programme of Action. We believe that this step will enable the nation to assemble data and other relevant information on the subject and compile a national report, thereby contributing further to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

However, implementation of the Programme of Action requires a wide range of expertise and financing resources and countries like mine will be facing difficulties in fully discharging their responsibilities. I, therefore, seize this opportunity to urge the Secretariat to mobilize resources and provide assistance, especially in the area of capacity-building.

In conclusion, my delegation once again reiterates the importance we attach to the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The Acting Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Ethiopia for the kind words addressed to the Chair and to the Bureau.

Ms. Verrier-Fréchette (Canada): Much good work has been done in the area of conventional weapons, and it is important to maintain this positive momentum.

Canada is proud to co-sponsor the draft resolution on the Ottawa Convention, a relatively recent international instrument that has made a real contribution to lessening the tragedies caused by anti-personnel mines. We welcome the ever-growing number of State Parties and want to achieve the instrument's universality. We are aware, though, that much remains to be done.

We call upon all States to join in this effort to achieve this important human security objective.

On small arms and light weapons, we have co-sponsored the draft resolutions presented by Japan and Mali, as well as the German draft resolution on practical disarmament measures. Keeping in mind the 2003 biennial meeting, we believe that States, the United Nations, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) all have an

important role to play in curbing small arms proliferation and in implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

For Canada, a people-centred approach is key to addressing many of the problems caused by small arms and light weapons. Yesterday we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conventional Arms Register (UNCAR). It is worth reiterating that UNCAR has been key to achieving enhanced transparency in armaments.

Finally, we would like to recognize the importance of the draft resolution on the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW), which now reflects two recent developments, the Second Review Conference on the CCW of December 2001, which launched an extensive inter-sessional process, and the extension of the scope of the Convention and its current Protocols to include armed conflicts of a non-international character, which Canada has accepted and which we encourage others to do at an early date.

We are looking forward to the meetings in December when we hope we will agree on ways to address the issue of explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines in order to advance the humanitarian objectives of the Convention.

Mr. Ngwenya (Mozambique): I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating the Chairman for the excellent manner in which he has been conducting the affairs of this First Committee. My delegation strongly recommends the inclusion on the agenda of the First Committee of agenda item 66 (p), entitled "General and complete disarmament: implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction". My Government attaches great importance to this item.

We thank the representative of Belgium for introducing the draft resolution on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Landmines represent a serious obstacle to stability and security, as well as to economic and social development. Landmines are responsible for large numbers of casualties and the suffering of innocent civilians, mainly women, children and elderly, particularly in countries affected by internal conflict.

Bearing in mind the extremely destructive power of these deadly devices, the international community made a bold statement through the Ottawa Convention on the need to outlaw the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destruction. The Ottawa Convention has been in force for quite some time and, as we have all seen, its vitality, relevance and strength have survived the test of time. It has played a major role in global affairs in ridding the world of the scourge of landmines, while also being at the forefront of demining in affected countries. However, two challenges remain: the eradication of anti-personnel mines and the universalization of the Convention. Those challenges must be met without delay.

During the Fourth Meeting of the States Parties, held at Geneva from 16 to 20 September 2002, the Government, civil society and the private sector reaffirmed their commitment to the total eradication of anti-personnel landmines. That commitment must be translated into action. As we prepare for the First Review Conference of the Convention, due to take place in 2004, we hope that it will result in the adoption of meaningful recommendations for the elimination of anti-personnel landmines and the universalization of the Convention. The trends so far have been encouraging, as the number of States parties has been increasing consistently. More than 120 States have signed the Convention, while not all of them have ratified it.

In Mozambique, anti-personnel landmines remain a high priority on the Government's agenda. As members will recall, during the protracted conflicts in my country, about 2 million landmines were planted, mostly without a clear mapping system. For that reason, my Government immediately signed and ratified the Ottawa Convention. We did so in recognition of the need to seek a durable solution to that issue. Within the context of the Ottawa Convention, Mozambique destroyed 70,000 landmines in 2001. We also cleared 8.8 million square metres between August 2001 and August 2002. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm once again Mozambique's commitment to conclude by 2003 the destruction of all mine stockpiles.

Mozambique is committed to playing an important role in combating landmines. Given its long experience in the field of mines, my country offers mine experts for work in various parts of the world. We are also training officials from Angola and Guinea-Bissau because we believe that the implementation of the Ottawa Convention requires strong international cooperation, in which all States, developed and developing, have meaningful roles to play. That partnership must be solidified. That can be done through this Committee's strong commitment to the draft resolution introduced by Belgium on behalf of the States parties.

Mr. Lezona (Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): There is currently a programme for the rehabilitation of ex-combatants and the collection of small arms, which began in 2000. It is now reaching its conclusion in the Republic of Congo. Its results are quite encouraging. More than 8,000 ex-combatants have benefited from rehabilitation assistance. The original target was 10,000 ex-combatants. One hundred and fourteen thousand arms and munitions have been collected and approximately FCFA 1.8 billion have been committed to 2,575 micro projects.

Those laudable efforts of the Congolese Government, undertaken with the help of other States and certain United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Development Programme, are, however, insufficient. Indeed, close to 25,000 declared ex-combatants not yet rehabilitated are awaiting assistance.

The rehabilitation of those young people requires the continued support of the international community. That is why in my country, which has co-sponsored draft resolutions A/C.1/57/L.25 and A/C.1/57/L.33, on assistance to States for curbing the illicit circulation of small arms and collecting them and on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, calls on participants of the First Committee to adopt those draft resolutions unanimously, as it did last year. It also urgently appeals to Member States of the Organization, particularly the group of States concerned with specific disarmament measures, to provide assistance to countries in post-conflict situations.

Finally, the Congolese Government has noted with satisfaction the study submitted by the United Nations on disarmament and non-proliferation, and it hopes to take the necessary measures to implement that education programme.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): Please allow me to extend our condolences to the people and Government of Indonesia, Australia and others on the tragic incident in Bali. My delegation shares their grief and hopes that the investigation will lead to an early identification of the cause of that disaster.

While my delegation maintains that the development, production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction pose the greatest threat to the survival of mankind, we are also seriously concerned about the illegal trade, transfer, circulation and use of small arms and light weapons. Those weapons have caused death, grievous harm and trauma to thousands of our people, including innocent children. They have also contributed to political and economic instability not only in Sierra Leone, but also in the West African subregion. Indeed, small arms and light weapons continue to pose a serious threat to peace in our part of the world.

Last year we participated actively in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. I was pleased that the Conference succeeded in adopting a Programme of Action that, we believe, should go a long way towards alleviating the seemingly unending suffering of our people. Expeditious implementation of the Programme of Action is absolutely necessary. It is only a matter of course that we should co-sponsor all draft resolutions related to small arms and light weapons, including A/C.1/57/L.25, on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them. Sierra Leone recently completed successfully a community arms collection exercise in addition to the demobilization, disarmament and rehabilitation programme of the Lomé Peace Agreement, and we are looking forward to the possibility of launching further arms collection measures in the context of the 2001 United Nations Conference Programme of Action and projects for the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures.

At the regional level, Sierra Leone was among the first countries to endorse the extension by the Economic Community of West African States of its moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms and light weapons in West

Africa. However, we believe that national and regional efforts to curb the menace of those weapons must be buttressed by effective international measures, in particular at the source of those deadly weapons. Sierra Leone therefore welcomes the Franco-Swiss initiative concerning marking and tracing mechanisms to check the illicit flow of those weapons. If States fail to see the necessity of taking action regarding the sale of small arms and light weapons to non-State entities — a matter of serious concern to my delegation and one on which we have been pressing for action — the least that they could do is join others in the current march towards international legally binding instruments on marking and tracing.

It is not enough to establish projects and programmes for the destruction of small arms and light weapons — as we have done in Sierra Leone — only after they have caused all that fatal damage to innocent lives. We must ensure that those weapons do not, in the first place, reach those who are prepared to acquire them illegally and to use them indiscriminately and illegally to kill our people.

Mr. Castellón Duarte (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to speak in support of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, introduced by Ambassador Lint of Belgium, on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. It is essentially the same as resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in previous years, while appropriately updated.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, known as the Ottawa Convention, was the result of enormous efforts by the international community. Humanitarian concerns, above all, were the principle motive for the creation of the Convention. Its subject is not mines in themselves, but human beings: mines as they relate to human beings and not the reverse. The humanitarian aspect of the Convention envisages assistance to victims and support for their rehabilitation and reintegration and for the economic development of communities and areas affected. To that end, it is crucial to have the full commitment of all States parties to the Convention and of States that have not yet acceded to the Convention in order to completely eradicate anti-personnel mines and to deal with their devastating humanitarian impact. The theme chosen for the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention, held in Geneva from 16 to 20 September, was "Every minute counts". With that theme, the meeting attempted to raise awareness of the fact that someone is killed or maimed by an anti-personnel mine every 20 minutes.

In draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, States that have not signed the Ottawa Convention are encouraged to accede to it without delay, and all States that have signed but not ratified the Convention are urged to ratify it without delay. States parties are requested to provide complete and timely information in accordance with the provisions of article 7 of the Convention, in order to promote transparency and compliance with the Convention. By this draft resolution, the General Assembly would also renew its appeal to all States and other relevant parties to work together to promote, support and advance the care, rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of mine victims, mine risk education programmes and the removal of anti-personnel mines placed throughout the world and the assurance of their destruction. The draft resolution also notes that the next Meeting of States Parties will be held in Bangkok from 15 to 19 November 2003.

My delegation believes that the process initiated by the Ottawa Convention cannot achieve the complete eradication of all anti-personnel mines throughout the world as long as there are Governments that refuse to accede to the Convention or to comply with its provisions. The media and non-governmental organizations specialized in this area report that anti-personnel mines continue to be used in various conflicts. For the well-being of this and future generations, we hope that these practices will not continue. This is a humanitarian cause. My delegation therefore requests all delegations and Governments to join this campaign in favour of life, to ratify the Convention and to join in sponsoring the draft resolution before us, which we hope will be adopted with the greatest possible number of votes.

The Acting Chairman: I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that the following Member States have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.4, Honduras; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20, Barbados and Liberia; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.30, Bangladesh; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.34, Honduras;

draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.35, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Papua New Guinea; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.36, Fiji; draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38, Bangladesh and Honduras; draft resolutions A/C.1/57/L.42 and A/C.1/57/L.44, Bangladesh and Honduras; and draft resolutions A/C.1/57/L.50 and A/C.1/57/L.51, Malaysia.

Organization of work

The Acting Chairman: As stated yesterday, in accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the third phase of the Committee's work, the action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73, will begin next week. In that connection, I would like to announce that a paper grouping together the draft resolutions in several clusters, contained in document A/C.1/57/CRP.3, has been made available.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/57/PV.14

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

First Committee
14th meeting
Thursday, 17 October 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: Delegations are invited this morning to make statements on regional disarmament, confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments and other disarmament measures and disarmament machinery. They are also invited to continue introducing draft resolutions.

Mr. Issa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Egyptian delegation is delighted to introduce the draft resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, A/C.1/57/L.27, submitted under agenda item 69. We present this draft resolution on behalf of the member States of the League of Arab States and other Member States of the United Nations.

In its preambular section, the draft resolution stresses the need to place all nuclear facilities in the region of the Middle East under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It recalls the recommendations of Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), particularly of 1995 and 2000, regarding the importance of ensuring universal adherence to the NPT with a view to sparing ourselves the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East region and throughout the world. Indeed, nuclear facilities continue to exist in the region, facilities not subject to the full-scope safeguards system.

The preamble notes also that Israel is the only State in the Middle East that has not yet become a party to the NPT. It exhorts all the States in the region to place their nuclear activities under full-scope safeguards with a view to turning the region into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

As to the operative portion of the draft resolution, it welcomes the recommendations issued at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and stresses the need for Israel to accede to the NPT, to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards and to foreswear any acquisition of nuclear weapons, while acceding to the NPT as early as possible.

The Egyptian delegation would have liked to witness any progress made by Israel towards implementing this resolution over the past year. However, all the recommendations embodied in this draft are still awaiting implementation. I hope that the majority of those who traditionally vote for this resolution will once again recognize the importance that the international community attaches to the need for Israel to accede to the NPT and to do so at the earliest possible date, heeding the appeal of the international community's legality.

Allow me to submit, on behalf of the Egyptian delegation, the draft resolution dealing with the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-64414 (E)

Middle East, in document A/C.1/57/L.28. This draft resolution, which has been before the First Committee since 1977, reflects the importance that the international community attaches to creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the concrete measures that the countries of the region should take to attain this end. It also reaffirms certain major principles related to the security of nuclear-weapons facilities and to national security and the essential role the United Nations must play in establishing such a zone.

The resolution calls upon the States of the region to strive towards the establishment of this nuclear-weapon-free zone by taking concrete measures and by committing themselves to abstain from any military nuclear activities. It also calls upon parties outside the region to support efforts led by the United Nations through steps to be taken by the Secretary-General to seek the views of States in the region and other countries concerned. It requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the General Assembly.

Though the wording of this draft resolution hardly differs from the text of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at the last session, the Egyptian delegation hopes that the consensus that this resolution has enjoyed for over 20 years will contribute to progress in its implementation at the earliest possible date.

I have the honour of submitting, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, the draft resolution on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in document A/C.1/57/L.29.

This text deals with the role played by the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the need to strengthen its work, endowing it with the resources required to allow it to play an active and effective role in supporting efforts to prevent conflicts and in bringing about peace and stability and coordination between the activities of the Centre and the conflict-settlement machinery within the African Union. The draft stresses the urgent need to support the Regional Centre and to provide it with the necessary financial resources.

The sixth preambular paragraph, which is a new paragraph in this draft resolution, refers to the report of the Secretary-General and the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services regarding the need to strengthen financial and administrative practices, in particular those concerning the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific. We are mindful of the important role that these Centres play and true institutional memory that they represent for the United Nations in this arena.

In conclusion, the draft resolution reaffirms the major role played by the African Regional Centre in implementing recommendations in the Programme of Action adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in July 2001, notably at the regional level and in cooperation with the African Union.

On behalf of the African Group, we hope that this resolution will continue to enjoy the backing of the First Committee and that it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee; I should like also to congratulate the members of the Bureau. I hope that your work will be crowned with success, and assure you of my delegation's readiness to cooperate.

Moreover, I should like to express our most sincere condolences to the Indonesian delegation and, through it, to the people and the Government of Indonesia, as well as to the bereaved families of those who fell victim to the criminal act perpetrated in Bali.

During the past year, the world has witnessed serious events and has been faced with significant challenges and threats to international peace and security. The international community has definitely made significant progress in combating terrorism. Nevertheless, it is vital to continue efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament and at the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. So, too, there is a need to maintain and strengthen the comprehensive safeguards regime in the field of nuclear weapons, in order to rid the world of these weapons of mass destruction, for the sake of all humankind.

The universal and comprehensive nature of this regime must also be strengthened so that States parties can implement all of its provisions. It is also important to ensure the universal nature of the Additional

Protocol to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Our delegation supports the draft resolution submitted by the brotherly country of Egypt dealing with the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and it wishes to emphasize the fact that the creation of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone is an important prerequisite for the strengthening of peace and security at both the regional and international levels.

States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted a separate resolution on the Middle East at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. Regrettably, Israel is the only State in the region that has not yet responded positively to the appeal made in that resolution to accede to the Treaty. States parties to the Treaty are called on to implement all the provisions of that resolution. The nuclear-weapon States and the sponsors of that resolution are called on to shoulder their responsibilities and to prompt Israel to submit to the obligations that the other countries in the region have undertaken with a view to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. There can be no discriminatory or selective approach here, nor can there be any policy of double standards.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was keen on acceding to the NPT and has abided by all of its provisions, continues to stress the need to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Kingdom would like to express its deep concern at Israel's intransigence and refusal to accede to the NPT and to submit its nuclear installations to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the fact that Israel's ongoing nuclear programme outside the safeguards regime and its continued refusal to accede to the NPT represent a threat to peace and stability, both regionally and internationally, and endanger the very credibility of the NPT.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): It is my honour to present to this Committee, on behalf of the more than 100 sponsors we have so far, the traditional annual draft resolution on transparency in armaments (A/C.1/57/L.37). The present text of the draft resolution is an update of the resolution that we submitted last year, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority.

Transparency in armaments is one of the major confidence-building principles among States which enables the international community to be better informed about military matters and developments. Transparency in armaments thus diminishes misperceptions and helps to avoid the distortion of information.

An important instrument of transparency in armaments in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. Earlier this week, a symposium was organized by Japan, the Netherlands and the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs to mark this occasion.

In the United Nations Register, Member States are requested to report, on a voluntary basis, on imports and exports of seven categories of major conventional arms, and, if they so desire, on their holdings. Over the last 10 years, more than 162 Governments have participated one or more times in this reporting instrument, while almost all of the major producers, exporters and importers of conventional arms have reported regularly to the Register.

The United Nations Secretariat estimates that the Register captures more than 95 per cent of the global trade in the seven categories of conventional arms covered by the Register. The Register has developed steadily over the years. It has established a de facto norm of transparency in armaments which Governments must take into account. It provides a significant amount of information, officially reported by Governments, which otherwise would not have been available. This information provides a legitimate basis for regional and interregional consultations between Governments.

The Register also performs an important role in public information, promoting accountability of political and military leaderships. The Register also has stimulated many Governments to improve their national systems for monitoring and controlling arms transfers. Finally, the Register has set an example for new regional initiatives, such as the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions.

Increased participation by Member States over the years demonstrates the growing confidence that transparency can also help prevent the excessive accumulation of arms by encouraging self-restraint in

military production and in the transfer of arms; and help ease tensions and strengthen regional and international peace and security.

We believe, therefore, that the international community should continue to improve and further develop the Register, both in terms of participation and in terms of scope of reporting. The Group of Experts, to be reconvened in 2003, will give us such an opportunity.

Notwithstanding all the good news this year on the Register, we are still far from having achieved true universal participation in the instrument. In this context, it is important to note that the concept of transparency in armaments is certainly not restricted to conventional arms only. The desirability of transparency applies as much to weapons of mass destruction as it does to conventional weapons. Multilateral treaties related to weapons of mass destruction already exist; there will be more, and such treaties provide for their own mechanisms to ensure transparency in weapons of mass destruction. The Netherlands will continue to work actively to promote greater transparency in the field of weapons of mass destruction.

I sincerely hope, therefore, that the Committee will continue to give widespread support to the draft resolution on transparency in armaments in general and to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms in particular, hopefully by adopting a draft resolution by consensus at some point in the future.

Mr. Al-Banai (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country has the honour of chairing the Arab Group this month. I welcome this opportunity to make a statement on behalf of the League of Arab States, which would like to reaffirm its position, as stated in 2 October 2000, with regard to transparency in armaments, in particular with regard to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. For a number of consecutive years, the States members of the Arab League have been making clear their position on the issue of transparency and their vision concerning the Register. It is a clear-cut and stable view, based essentially on matters involving global disarmament and a regional plan determined by the particular situation in the Middle East.

The States members of the Arab League support transparency in armaments as a measure for consolidating peace and security worldwide, because they are convinced that such transparency must be governed by basic principles that are clearly determined, balanced, all-encompassing, non-selective and aimed at the consolidation of international, regional and national security, in keeping with international law.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms represents the first attempt by the international community to resolve issues of transparency at the international level. Although the key potential value of the Register is its role as a confidence-building measure and as an undisputed early warning mechanism, it has met with many obstacles, resulting mainly from the fact that almost half of the membership of the United Nations has consistently failed to supply information to it. In this connection, the States members of the Arab League believe that we must expand the Register, especially since past experience with conventional arms suggests that States, including some Arab States, participate in the Register precisely because it is limited in scope and thus far does not fully address current security needs.

The future success of the Register will depend on the readiness of the international community to build greater confidence and transparency. The Register, in line with General Assembly resolution 46/36, which provided for its establishment and called for the provision of information on advanced conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, notably with regard to nuclear weapons and related advanced military technology, could become a more balanced, all-encompassing and less discriminatory tool and could thus attract more participants.

The Middle East region is in a unique position as a result of the qualitative imbalance with regard to weapons within it and because of the fact that transparency and confidence can be achieved only if a proper and comprehensive balance is struck with regard to such weapons. Bringing about transparency in the Middle East on seven categories of conventional weapons while leaving out more lethal, advanced and complex weapons, such as weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, is an unbalanced and incomprehensive approach and is an obstacle to the achievement of the results that we hope for. It does not take into account the current situation in the Middle East. Israel continues to occupy Arab land, and it possesses nuclear weapons — the most lethal weapons of mass destruction — and is the only State in

the region not to have submitted its nuclear installations to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency; nor has it acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The parties to the NPT, at the 2000 Review Conference, all stressed the need for Israel to accede to the Treaty and to place its facilities under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system. The States members of the Arab League regret the failure of the group of governmental experts that met in 2000, as well as that of other expert-level meetings, to expand the Register to include military acquisitions and domestically produced weapons, as well as weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. That failure goes against the very rationale of the Register; it is a sign of its static nature and its unsuitability to current needs, in its present form, as an effective tool for confidence-building and as an early warning mechanism.

The States members of the Arab League would thus like to see full international participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms so that it can play its proper role of confidence-building and early warning. We call for progress along those lines.

Mr. Pant (Nepal): I should like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the responsible position of Chairman of the First Committee. We assure you of our fullest cooperation in the exercise of your duty as you steer the Committee's affairs to a successful conclusion.

I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my Government and the people of Nepal, to extend our heartfelt condolences to the Government of Indonesia and, through it, to the families of the innocent victims of the terrorist attack in Bali. As an ardent believer in the culture of peace and tolerance, Nepal abhors and condemns that criminal act and calls upon the international community to work together in tightening the noose on the perpetrators of such heinous acts against humanity.

Having made those comments, I would like to introduce a draft resolution under agenda item 67 (h), entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific".

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.35 has been sponsored to date by Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Viet Nam and my own country, Nepal.

While most paragraphs of the draft resolution remain unchanged — except for the purpose of updating — the second and eighth preambular paragraphs underscore the validity of the Centre as a vehicle to promote peace and disarmament in the region, as is reflected in the Secretary-General's report on the subject. Likewise, the draft resolution, through its operative paragraph 6, embodies the genuine desire of all the sponsors to see the Centre function effectively from its designated location — that is, from Kathmandu — upon conclusion of the host country agreement.

We the sponsors are confident that the draft resolution would bring about concrete results by way of ensuring an early relocation of the Centre from New York to Kathmandu and would address the concerns of the people in the region through an increased focus on galvanizing the pace and the process of regional disarmament. It is also the sincere hope of my delegation, as well as of the other sponsors, that the draft resolution, as has become customary, will be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Nepal for the kind words that he addressed to the Bureau.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): The purpose of this intervention is to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.39, entitled "Regional disarmament", on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Turkey and my own delegation.

International security and disarmament are interlinked and need to be pursued globally and at the regional level. While international disarmament measures are vital, in most instances security and disarmament can be most effectively promoted at the regional level. As the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.39 notes, the guidelines and

recommendations for regional approaches towards disarmament, within the context of global security, were adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1993. Those guidelines remain relevant in the present day to promoting regional disarmament in the conventional and non-conventional fields.

It is now quite evident that, in most areas of tension and potential conflict, the regional approach could offer a most effective basis for the promotion of disarmament and the enhancement of security. Accordingly, the draft resolution notes the recent proposals for disarmament at the regional and subregional levels and expresses the conviction that endeavours to promote regional disarmament, taking into account the specific characteristics of each region and in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, enhance the security of all States. The draft resolution, therefore, stresses the need for sustained efforts in that direction, affirms that regional approaches for disarmament complement each other, and calls on States to conclude agreements where possible. It welcomes the initiatives towards disarmament, non-proliferation and security undertaken by some countries at the regional and subregional levels, while encouraging and supporting confidence-building measures.

Adoption of this draft resolution will encourage the concerned countries to pursue endeavours for regional disarmament and will help to strengthen regional and international security. It is, therefore, the hope of the sponsors that, as was the case last year, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.39, on regional disarmament, will be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words that he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. Handzlik (Poland): As my delegation is taking the floor for the first time, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee during this session of the General Assembly.

It is a privilege for me to address this important forum of experts and disarmament luminaries, having long been involved in the question of weapons of mass destruction and missile proliferation. This is the proper forum and the perfect opportunity to share a few observations about Poland's position on those issues.

First, I should like to note the change that has occurred over the past few months with regard to the international security environment. The events of 11 September 2001 demonstrate the kind of change that has taken place. There is a new general awareness of threats. That fact alone highlights all of the threats that societies and the international community as a whole must deal with in the years ahead. That is not to suggest that terrorism is likely to be the only kind of challenge or threat to our security, regardless of the part of the world that we come from.

Even now, threats are identified in many documents — whether adopted by the United Nations or by original security structures — or are otherwise reflected in various national security doctrines. Those threats no longer have boundaries. They may stem from local crises and conflicts or from local terrorism; they may be inherent in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; they may be rooted in the information age. In any case, they now transcend all boundaries. Today, each geographical region or State faces threats that are familiar and common.

The Polish Government attaches the highest importance to non-proliferation, arms limitation, disarmament and export control. The Government of Poland sees those as tools to be used in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, where missiles and related technologies play the key role. In some ways, the world is becoming a more dangerous place as certain countries and non-State actors look for technologies and weapons that can threaten our existence. Now, more than ever before, the international community needs to implement effective ways and means of regulating the export of essentially dangerous technologies, goods and dual-use items, while addressing the national imperatives of economic growth and social development. Today, the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles is more diverse and unpredictable than it has ever been. That must be of serious concern to all of us; it is a problem that we all must tackle together.

In that connection, I should like to refer to the Fourth International Conference on Export Controls, held recently at Warsaw under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland. One of the many important conclusions of the Conference was that the international community must continue to search for

new and adequate mechanisms to deal with the problem as a whole.

At the same time, it is important to use the tools that we already have and to ensure that they are being used effectively in a mutually reinforcing way. These tools must be kept sharp, and they must be kept in good condition, so that the international community can continue developing and deploying them effectively. Some of the principal tools are diplomacy, deterrence, denial and disruption.

It goes without saying that the international community must make a constructive contribution these days in the fields of non-proliferation, export control, disarmament and arms limitation. These steps are aimed, on the one hand, at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery, and, on the other, developing effective and non-discriminatory international verification and control mechanisms.

The tragic events of 11 September have shown us the desperate need to attain a higher standard of security. We must now make joint efforts to consolidate international security, in particular on the regional scale. We cannot afford not to work together. The international community now has a rare opportunity to radically downgrade the role of missiles in military doctrines.

Efforts to stabilize the international situation can in no way be limited to the defence area alone. Of critical importance is the constructive application of diplomacy and available legal means to promote democracy, human rights, freedom and civil society. At the same time, we cannot shut our eyes to the immediate threats that derive from existing weapons of mass destruction, the development of new types of weapons and the steady erosion of arms control and disarmament agreements. Nor can we overlook the lack of control of access to such weapons by non-State — and, hence, uncontrollable — actors.

As stated in the report on the issue of missiles in all its aspects, prepared by the Panel of Governmental Experts for the Secretary-General, the current situation in the field of missiles is a serious threat to international peace and security. The report notes that there are multiple approaches currently being undertaken at the national, bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels, dealing with the issue of missiles, both within and outside the United Nations.

As the destabilizing effects of missiles and related technology become ever more evident, the international community is becoming increasingly worried over existing gaps in international norms against the proliferation of missiles. Until now, we have only seen initiatives that applied to three areas: limitation and elimination of military missile inventory; missile launch transparency; and the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear-armed missiles. It seems that the only multilateral mechanism explicitly addressing the issue of the threat of ballistic missile proliferation is a universally acceptable draft of an international code of conduct against ballistic missile proliferation. Initially developed by the members of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR, 1987), it is now open to all States, to be adopted in the near future during the International Conference, which will be held in November in The Hague.

The code, as proposed, is to be a politically binding agreement to promote the prevention and curbing of the proliferation of ballistic missile systems and to develop norms on missile behaviour. Furthermore, this agreement would promote confidence regarding missile and space launch vehicle activities. The agreement is intended to establish global principles, commitments to transparency and other confidence-building measures that address the proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction. The code should be seen as the first step towards building a widely subscribed-to multilateral document that addresses the proliferation of ballistic missiles. It would appeal to States to cooperate on a voluntary basis in curbing ballistic missile proliferation. In order for the code to succeed, it must be subscribed to by a large number of countries from all regions.

Thus far, as the fear of proliferation grows, based on political, economic and technological developments, both from countries that supply it and those that demand it, the MTCR is the only multilateral mechanism that explicitly addresses the issue. What this amounts to is a set of policy guidelines accepted so far by 33 States which have agreed to coordinate their export control policies based on common guidelines and on a shared list of controlled items which each partner implements through its own national legislation.

It is clear that an arrangement like the MTCR is becoming increasingly important when the threat of missiles is taking on new and ominous forms. A number of States have crossed the missile threshold, while others appear to have similar ambitions. Some States, capable of using missiles, are said to be trying to develop warheads with weapons of mass destruction. The international community is ever more anxious about effective measures to check this dangerous trend. In order to deal with self-evident concerns, the MTCR should be joined by all missile-producing States. The universalization of MTCR guidelines and procedures is, and will be, the way to successfully impede the proliferation of missiles and technologies.

In this connection, I should like to refer to the results of the 17th MTCR plenary meeting, held in Warsaw between 21 and 27 September. This important event marked the start of Poland's chairmanship of the Regime for 2002 and 2003. The 33 members mandated the Polish chair to pursue a range of contacts with non-partners, through MTCR-sponsored workshops, seminars and information sessions concerning the MTCR's goals, with a focus on such topics as export control policies, procedures, related legislation, control lists, trans-shipment, transit and enforcement. Referring to the worldwide fight against terrorism, the MTCR partners agreed to issue a statement on Joint Action, in which they stated that the MTCR would continue contributing to the fight against terrorism by limiting the risk of controlled items and technologies falling into the hands of groups and/or individuals who pose a risk. The Joint Action statement also called upon all States to take similar action. But no one should be expected to do this in isolation; we should work in partnership to tackle threats and the risks that we all share.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the MTCR, chaired by Poland, will make every possible effort to curb the proliferation of delivery vehicles for weapons of mass destruction in order to foster regional and international security.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Poland for his kind words addressed to the Chair.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Hungary, Ambassador Tibor Toth, President of the Fifth Review Conference on the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), who will introduce draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22.

Mr. Toth (Hungary): First of all, Mr. Chairman, may I congratulate you on your election. With your permission, I would like to introduce draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22. In addition, I would like to make a couple of comments on the issue of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

Draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22 is straightforward. In its operative paragraph it requests the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to depositary Governments of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the review conferences, as well as the decisions contained in the final report of the Special Conference of 1994, and to render the necessary assistance and provide such services as may be required for the Fifth Review Conference, which will reconvene at Geneva from 11 to 22 November 2002. I wish to express the hope that draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22 will be adopted the same way it was last year, without a vote.

I would like to make a couple of comments on the Biological Weapons Convention. In the course of the past year or so, a new realism has been emerging about deliberate diseases. The anthrax incident, against the tragic background of 11 September, clearly demonstrated the potential consequences for any society, if, notwithstanding the norm — prevention or deterrence — the genie of misuse of biotechnology or biodefence gets out of the bottle.

There is much broader public awareness of the threat by now. First, the destructive potential of deliberate disease as a weapon, or as a weapon of terror, is second to none. Minuscule quantities of biological agents used in an efficient way could cause massive disruption of life, widespread terror and critical disruption of basic societal activities. Secondly, however treacherous biological weapons are, once prevention fails and those weapons are used, it is difficult to ascertain the exact scope of their use to identify victims, find a perpetrator and find the place and infrastructure where the substances were developed and produced. Thirdly, the challenge is not just hype, existing as mere fiction. Deliberate disease is a real and present danger.

As a result of the serious setbacks encountered in the past 18 months, there is a new realism emerging about the Biological Weapons Convention regime as

well. There is a less ambitious, yet still meaningful role, to be assigned to the regime. We should be candid with ourselves and the outside world. That potentially new role is different than building in a holistic way an all-encompassing compliance system. But it is becoming more and more evident that, even in a more realistic role, the Biological Weapons Convention regime can provide a unique framework for measures to benchmark and enhance implementation and to decrease the likelihood of deliberate, accidental or naturally occurring diseases that take a high toll.

It can be done through successive steps — measures that would not necessarily be legally binding, and efforts undertaken both nationally and internationally. The purpose of such an incremental advance is not just to take action to make ourselves busy. To the contrary, as the encouraging example of the regulatory and safety activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) historically prove, such an incremental advance is feasible and meaningful.

This is not a silver bullet function for the BWC regime, but a task to work together synergistically with other tools. To reach the critical mass of decision for such a complementary role, some basic questions will have to be answered. First, beyond norm-setting, is there any real-life functional requirement for the BWC regime? Secondly, could all other containment and mitigation means, such as export controls, non-proliferation, defence, civilian defence, preparedness, vaccination and disease control, individually or collectively handle the whole spectrum of the threat without any margin of error, thus making complementary tools like the BWC regime redundant? Thirdly, is there a premium on preventive measures, such as identifying and rectifying implementation deficiencies, compared to those measures that are aimed at mitigating the consequences of deliberate or accidental disease?

In the wake of 11 September and the anthrax incident, there has been a significant increase of potential and investment in export controls, non-proliferation, defence, civilian defence, preparedness, vaccination, disease surveillance, and control and management efforts all around the world. The dilemma is whether any country or authority can claim, with the necessary degree of assurance, that all those means, with additional investment, will ensure not just a mere quantitative increase in safety, compared to all the bottlenecks of the pre-anthrax incident security world, but that they would also guarantee a new quality of biosecurity. In other words, will those means, under any circumstance, leave any margin for error in the future? If the slightest doubt exists that, notwithstanding all resolve, efforts and investments, there still might be a future margin for error, writing off the BWC regime or declaring it redundant is an unaffordable luxury.

Compared to other means, the potential contribution of the BWC regime is relatively cost effective, both politically and in terms of resources. It could be cost effective politically because it can provide timely warning about implementation deficiencies, enabling problems to be rectified or addressed in a preventive way, either within or outside the BWC regime. As for resource allocation, such measures are cost effective as well because they have a combined price tag whose magnitude is several degrees lower than the cost and resource implications of other equally useful but more expensive means, such as those for mitigating the consequences of deliberate or accidental disease.

We should turn present challenges into opportunity. The Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, to be reconvened on 11 November 2002, will provide a chance to unfold in a realistic and incremental manner the unused potential of the BWC regime. Nearly a year ago, at the Fifth Review Conference, we could not reach such an agreement, although we came close to it. The three rounds of informal presidential consultations I carried out in the spring, summer and autumn of this year revealed, hopefully not just to me, but to all the parties, that a forward-looking, modest but meaningful agreement on the follow-up to the Review Conference is within reach.

Since the summer round of those consultations, there has been growing support for focusing a resumed review conference specifically on follow-up, and then on wrapping up its work swiftly. The follow-up mechanism would enable States parties to meet annually and consider measures to strengthen the BWC. Such annual meetings could be supplemented by experts' meetings for enhancing the implementation of measures forwarded by consensus. Both the annual meeting of States parties and the experts' meetings will have to concentrate on a relatively limited number of issues to ensure that focused and results-oriented work

is taking place in the limited time available annually for those meetings. The programme of work for the next couple of years should outline how to carry forward the work in a way that, by the beginning of the next review conference, the mechanism indeed produces concrete and effective measures.

Compared to all previous review conferences, such a follow-up mechanism would represent a qualitatively new product — an agreement on both the ways and means of enhancing the implementation of measures to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention.

By now we know too well where our differences lie. The emerging new realities about this threat and the role of the Biological Weapons Convention should be based on what is a shared aspiration for all of us: joining efforts in countering deliberate disease. Once that goal is taken seriously, we cannot afford to be bogged down on the methodological differences of how to attain that goal. Let us concentrate on what we can agree on now. Let us do it and, as a result of measurable progress, let us create new ground for further joint action.

Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Not only has conventional arms control not lost its relevance today but, on the contrary, it is gaining increasing significance on the regional and subregional levels. The spread of conventional weapons in a particular region and the lack of effective control and verification mechanisms have the potential to threaten global security and stability. The rise of tensions in a given region and the uncontrolled deployment of arms and military technology can develop into armed conflicts that can spread to other regions as well.

The Republic of Belarus believes that confidence-building and security measures constitute key elements in conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels. The primary goal of confidence-building and security measures in conventional arms control is to strengthen regional security as an active element of international security and to reduce the risk of the outbreak of armed conflict. The development of confidence-building and security measures objectively promotes a reduction in the risk for misunderstanding and miscalculation of military activities, averts military confrontation and lowers the risk of certain attack and the outbreak of war as a result of a military incident. In creating in a region a climate in which the importance of the military element is gradually diminishing, confidence-building and security measures can promote a process of balanced arms reduction and a more effective functioning of verification regimes.

We welcome the efforts of countries that have concluded appropriate bilateral and multilateral agreements on confidence-building and security measures in the military and political spheres. We call upon other States to support initiatives aimed at achieving agreements on confidence-building and security measures in the area of conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels.

In our view, the best approach to establishing and consistently developing confidence-building and security measures in the military and political spheres is one that provides for flexibility and for the implementation of shared interests in the area of regional security and conventional arms control. Moreover, in so doing there must be a guarantee of the inalienable right of a State to an adequate level of security, on the understanding that no single State or group of States parties to agreements on confidence-building and security measures will attempt to gain advantages over another party at any stage of the implementation and development of confidence-building and security measures.

In citing the example of regional agreements on conventional arms control, I would like once again to note the role and significance on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which is a key element of European security. The Republic of Belarus was an active party in the negotiating process on the adaptation of the Treaty to new geopolitical conditions in Europe, and, in the year 2000, was first among States parties to ratify the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The adapted Treaty signals a shift from old relations in Europe during the time of the cold war, which were characterized by bloc confrontation and resistance, to a new stage based on cooperation and confidence. The adaptation of the Treaty also made possible the accession of new States to it.

The Republic of Belarus favours the speedy entry into force of the adapted Treaty, as well as the accession of new members to the Treaty. In our view, this will make it possible to conclude the building of a new architecture for European security, to strengthen confidence and enhance transparency in a region

ranging from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and serve as a good incentive and example for States in other regions of the world. In that regard, we urgently call on States parties to the Treaty that have not yet ratified the Agreement on Adaptation to do so as soon as possible.

We also support the idea of considering the matter of drafting principles that could serve as a basis for regional agreements on conventional arms control at the Conference on Disarmament.

In conclusion, emphasizing the consistency of its policy in the sphere of international security and conventional arms control, the Republic of Belarus is once again a sponsor of the draft resolution entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels".

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.15.

Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time I take the floor in the First Committee, allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the Central African Republic, to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to the chairmanship. I have no doubt that, given your talents as an experienced diplomat, the work of the First Committee will be a success. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.15, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa". I am introducing this draft resolution on behalf of the following members of the Committee: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

The objective of the Standing Advisory Committee, which was established on 28 May 1992, is to promote arms limitation, disarmament, non-proliferation and development in the subregion in order to address the concerns associated with the spread of conflict in that part of Africa. Maintaining an international balance necessarily involves confidence-building measures, both domestically and externally. It is therefore indispensable that the member States of the Committee follow a code of conduct in their relations. Mutual confidence must continually be renewed to guarantee the stability lacking in the region.

The efforts made by the United Nations to maintain international peace and security address those concerns. Since its establishment, the Standing Advisory Committee has in fact committed itself to a process conducive to building confidence among and between States. Its member States have therefore agreed to pursue cooperation and a concerted approach among the security forces of the countries of Central Africa, in particular by holding regular meetings and joint exercises, carrying out joint border patrols, holding meetings between administrative and military authorities on the border to reduce tensions between populations and reinforce confidence, and holding bilateral and multilateral summit meetings to deal with security issues.

Those few achievements well illustrate the degree of awareness among the States of the subregion of the need to continue to pursue peace efforts so that development may become a reality.

Peace has no price and development cannot be achieved without it. Thus, the triptych of peace, security and development dovetails directly into efforts to achieve disarmament, the dividends of which would benefit economic and social development.

The text of the draft resolution under consideration does not differ radically in either substance or form from that of preceding years. What we feel to be of the essence is the message it sends to the General Assembly to take note of the Secretary-General's report and to reaffirm its support for efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at regional and subregional levels in order to ease tensions and conflicts in Central Africa and to further peace, stability and sustainable development in the subregion, as stipulated in operative paragraphs 1 and 2.

The Assembly would also reaffirm its support for the programme of work of the Standing Advisory Committee adopted at the organizational meeting of the Committee, held at Yaoundé from 27 to 31 July 1992. The programme represents the basic premise for programmes already drafted and under way.

In paragraph 4, which contains new elements, the Assembly would note with satisfaction the progress

made by the States members of the Committee for the period 2001-2002, in particular by holding a Subregional Conference on the Protection of Women and Children in Armed Conflict in Central Africa at Kinshasa from 14 to 16 November 2001; holding a meeting of Chiefs of Staff of the member States of the Standing Advisory Committee at Libreville from 18 to 20 March 2002; holding the seventeenth ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee at Kinshasa from 22 to 26 April 2002; holding the subregional consultation on the theme "Parity and development: Participation of the Central African woman" at Douala from 28 to 30 May 2002; and holding the eighteenth ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee at Bangui from 26 to 30 August 2002.

In paragraph 5, the General Assembly would emphasize the importance of providing the States members of the Committee with the essential support they need to carry out the full programme of activities which they adopted at their ministerial meetings.

In paragraph 8, it would request the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to provide their full assistance for the proper functioning of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa.

In paragraph 9, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1197 (1998), to provide the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee with the necessary support for the implementation and smooth functioning of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa and the early-warning mechanism.

In paragraph 13, the General Assembly would appeal to Member States and to governmental and non-governmental organizations to make additional voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the implementation of the programme of work of the Standing Advisory Committee.

In paragraph 14, the Secretary-General would be requested to continue to provide the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee with assistance to ensure that they are able to carry on their efforts.

In conclusion, I express the hope that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.15 — which, on behalf of the members of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, I submit to the benevolent attention of member States for their essential support — will be adopted by consensus, as in previous years.

Mr. Al-Otaiba (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to express my appreciation, Sir, for your valuable efforts in directing the deliberations of this Committee.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world is a great contribution to preventing the proliferation of such weapons and to reducing the danger of a nuclear war. It is also one of the principal measures designed to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons and to achieve total and comprehensive disarmament.

The United Arab Emirates, realizing that the establishment of such zones is a main step towards achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament in particular, and disarmament in general, endorses all General Assembly resolutions regarding the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, above all nuclear weapons, in the Middle East, and we support all efforts made to fulfil it. Moreover, the United Arab Emirates has taken concrete steps toward that goal by acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The Middle East region is ruled by an obvious imbalance in power, due to the fact that Israel, an occupying country that practices terrorism and military aggressor in the occupied Palestinian lands, possesses a huge arsenal of weapons, nuclear weapons in particular. In addition, it refuses to join the NPT and to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), thus posing a direct threat to the security of the Arab nations, weakening the credibility and universality of the NPT and hindering the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, leading to the perpetuation of the security imbalance in the region.

In 1974, the General Assembly called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In 1980, the resolution concerning this issue gained impetus and importance after it was adopted unanimously. Moreover, the resolutions on the Middle East, adopted by States parties at the two Conferences for the revision and extension of the NPT

in 1995 and 2000, call on all countries to take practical measures, inter alia, to achieve progress towards the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, and nuclear, chemical and biological weapons in particular, and their means of delivery. They also call for the verification of these measures and for no step to be taken to oppose such measures. States parties, in the Final Document issued at the 2000 Review Conference, also insisted on the importance of Israel's acceding to the NPT and subjecting its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA.

The United Arab Emirates attaches great importance to making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. It also reiterates its conviction that establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East requires the implementation of paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, by which it calls for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction.

Accordingly, we call, first, for Israel, the only party in the Middle East that has not yet acceded, to accede unconditionally to the NPT, to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA and to eliminate all its weapons of mass destruction, especially its nuclear weapons, in accordance with the Security Council resolution 687 (1991). Secondly, the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those that are permanent members of the Security Council, must assume their responsibility for ensuring the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons in the Middle East as soon as possible, given the explosive situation in the region, which jeopardizes all attempts to achieve peace and security there. Thirdly, the NPT must be implemented by all parties in the region without exception. Fourthly, comprehensive nuclear-weapon disarmament in the Middle East should not constitute an obstacle to the acquisition of know-how or to the peaceful scientific uses of nuclear energy.

In conclusion, we hope that our deliberations will lead to the attainment of the desired objectives through the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as soon as possible.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for his kind words.

Mr. Atieh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation supports the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East". I should like to clarify a few points in that regard.

First, Syria was among the first States in the Middle East region to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Our Legislative Act 169 of 1969 contained Syria's accession to the Treaty. Syria is at the forefront of the movement to rid the Middle East region of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, as a result of our conviction that the possession of such destructive weapons by any State in the region would constitute a threat and a source of profound concern, not only for the States of the region but also for all States of the world.

Secondly, all Arab States have acceded to the NPT. However, Israel still refuses to accede to the Treaty, and it also refuses to sign a comprehensive safeguard agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or to subject all its nuclear facilities to inspection. As a result, the NPT will not achieve the required universality, and the danger of nuclear weapons will not be averted in the Middle East. Israel refused to abide by any international resolutions adopted in this regard, whether by the General Assembly, by the Security Council or by the IAEA. The most recent of these was resolution GC(46)/RES/16 of 20 September 2002, adopted during the forty-sixth regular session of the IAE General Conference.

Thirdly, the fact that Israel remains outside the NPT and the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA continues to pose considerable concern and threats to peace and security, not only in the Middle East region but throughout the world.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Dhanapala: I should like to speak in relation to draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.35, on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific.

As will be recalled, the Permanent Representative of Nepal addressed a letter to the Secretary-General, dated 22 August 2002, on the issue of the relocation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, and asked that the letter be circulated as a document of this, the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Nepal, The Honourable Mr. Arjon Jung Bahaur Singh, also referred to that matter in a statement before the Assembly on 19 September 2002, as did the Permanent Representative of Nepal on 4 October this year during the general debate of the First Committee. It is obvious, therefore, that this is a matter of deep concern to Nepal. The United Nations and, I believe, Member States feel a similar commitment to finding a solution to this long-standing problem. That is one of the reasons why I felt compelled to address the Committee on the issue.

In a letter dated 27 September 2002, the Secretary-General replied to the Government of Nepal, drawing attention to the position of the United Nations, as set out in his report to the General Assembly contained in document A/57/260, and reaffirming his willingness to reach mutual accord on a host country agreement and on a memorandum of understanding. My Department would like an early implementation of the Secretary-General's stated readiness to find a swift solution, and it has sought to address the issue with a view to reaching an agreement that conforms to the rules and regulations of the United Nations as well as to international norms.

It should be noted that agreements inevitably vary from country to country, since they reflect the conditions existing in a particular country. The agreements proposed to Nepal for the Asia and Pacific Regional Centre were prepared in close consultation among the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Controller's Office and the United Nations Development Programme in Kathmandu, just like any other host country agreement and memorandum of understanding prepared by the United Nations, and they reflect prevailing United Nations policies.

Another aspect that the United Nations is required to consider very seriously in order to proceed with the relocation of the Centre is the question of security — the security of its staff and the security of its premises. Security, as all will appreciate, is increasingly a matter of paramount importance, just as it is right here at Headquarters. These agreements must contain precise security requirements that cannot be ignored or negotiated. They incur costs that the United Nations has no mandate to bear by itself.

With regard to the need for a new host country agreement and a memorandum of understanding, there were several concerns that had to be dealt with. The previous agreements had been signed in 1988 and were considered outdated and insufficient for the present time. The world has changed dramatically since 1988, and the agreements had to reflect the new political and practical realities, including current costs. Therefore, new agreements were prepared that set forth, among other things, the details of the requirements for the effective relocation of the Centre, as well as the contribution to be made by the host Government. Similar revisions have had to be made in respect of the Lima and Lomé Centres.

I would like to stress that those new provisions are needed to avoid future financial difficulties that would impede the work of the Regional Centre; they were drafted in accordance with operative paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 55/34 H, which indicates that the Government of Nepal would "bear the operational cost of the Centre for it to function from Kathmandu".

The Secretariat has also agreed to Nepal's request that the sum of $63,000, which represents the accumulation of its voluntary contributions up to 1997, be set aside for the purpose of the initial establishment of the Regional Centre and for equipment and other facilities that would be required by the Centre.

In his response to the Nepalese Government's letter, the Secretary-General noted that the Secretariat was awaiting a favourable reply with regard to the proposed host country agreement, presented to Nepal on 6 December 2001 and the memorandum of understanding given to Nepal informally on 12 April and presented formally on 16 May 2002. He expressed the hope that an early and positive response would be forthcoming. The Department for Disarmament Affairs is determined to reach agreement with the Government of Nepal on any outstanding issues as soon as possible and welcomes the support of the members of this Committee to facilitate the effective operation of the Regional Centre.

I would like to close my remarks by reiterating the readiness of the United Nations and the Department

for Disarmament Affairs to cooperate with the Government of Nepal and Member States to seek feasible and satisfying solutions to the relocation of the Regional Centre. In that regard, I would suggest that Member States consider the possibility of supporting the relocation and operation of the Centre through direct contributions or ensuring the financial stability of the Centre. Any other solution that may be useful to overcome the present situation and enable the effective operation of the Regional Centre will be welcome.

We are united in the quest for a solution to that issue. I am convinced that a cooperative attitude among all Member States, the Government of Nepal and the Secretariat is the right means to bring this quest to an end.

The Chairman: In the exercise of the right of reply, I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Bar (Israel): First, let me congratulate you, Sir, on the effective and wise manner in which you run the deliberations of the First Committee and to offer you any help we can to continue that way. We also would like to take the opportunity and extend our condolences both to the people of Indonesia and the Philippines on the terrible terrorist attack they suffered. We fully share their feelings. We know how they feel.

Earlier this morning, my Egyptian colleague presented two draft resolutions that deal directly with the Middle East. While I share his hopes regarding one of the resolutions, namely a consensus support for the draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone, I am afraid that I do not share his call for support for the draft resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

We will be part of the consensus on the nuclear-weapon-free zone draft resolution, and we will describe, as usual, our detailed views and the modalities to enhance it. At the same time, we believe that one-sided and unbalanced draft resolutions aimed at isolating and alienating Israel, such as the draft resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, do not contribute to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Moreover, they undermine the confidence and the climate of cooperation that are an essential basis for achieving that end, ignoring the complex reality of the region. Countries, particularly in the Middle East, should realize that those draft resolutions cannot be a substitute for the need to conduct direct negotiations, build confidence, reduce threats and establish stable, peaceful relations in the region, all of which are essential milestones on the way to a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We, therefore, urge those countries wishing to enhance the draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone to vote against the draft concerning the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

I wish to take the opportunity to call attention to a strained ritual repeated every year by countries that are not willing to participate in the mechanism of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, a minimally basic, voluntary mechanism. Yet, those countries take advantage of their rejectionist attitude in order to attack Israel with baseless accusations, offering ambitious and absurd proposals on how to strengthen the Register, while intending in reality to undermine that instrument.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

United Nations A/C.1/57/PV.15

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

First Committee
15th meeting
Thursday, 17 October 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman: The first speaker is the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, who will introduce resolution A/C.1/57/L.16.

Mr. Sealy (Trinidad and Tobago): Since this is the first occasion on which the delegation of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is taking the floor in the First Committee at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, allow me, Sir, to express my delegation's total satisfaction at seeing you preside over this Committee's work, as well as at the manner in which you and the other members of the Bureau have been conducting the work of the Committee on the vital issue of disarmament.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for the month of October 2002, I have the honour to introduce on behalf of the Group this year's draft resolution on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is contained in document A/C.1/57/L.16.

Fortunately, the Latin American and Caribbean region has to a large extent been spared in recent times the ravages and debilitating effects of internal and cross-border conflicts with which other regions have been afflicted. In that regard, it is therefore important that we in the region continue to strive to attain the interrelated goals of peace, stability, security and development.

An analysis of the Secretary-General's report on the activities of the Centre, contained in document A/57/116 of 27 June 2002, reveals that the Centre continues to discharge effectively its mandate. To that end, some of the activities in which the Centre was engaged during the reporting period July 2001 to June 2002 have been the signing of memorandums of understanding, one with the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation on cooperation on measures to reduce illegal trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition; and the other with the Costa Rican-based United Nations-affiliated University for Peace, on joint measures to facilitate cooperation and coordination in Latin America and the Caribbean through research and training activities on matters relating to peace, disarmament and development.

In each of the seven areas in which the Centre's activities are concentrated — namely firearms, ammunition and explosives, anti-personnel landmines, conventional weapons, nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, and information and public events — the Centre has organized seminars and workshops, participated in symposiums, assessed the feasibility of the destruction of several thousand firearms and rounds of ammunition at the request of two neighbouring Latin American countries, observed the final destruction in

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Peru of thousands of anti-personnel landmines, forged institutional links with other regional organizations and treaty bodies to identify synergies and to avoid duplication of effort and, finally, has even begun the preparation of publications, focusing on the activities of the Centre relating to anti-personnel landmines, import and export of conventional weapons, military expenditures, and confidence-building and security-building measures.

In the light of the very substantive activities that have been carried out by the Centre and the highly relevant projects that are planned but which require extrabudgetary resources, it gives me great pleasure to submit draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.16 and to draw to the attention of members the key provisions of this year's draft resolution.

In the third preambular paragraph, the General Assembly would underline the revitalization of the Centre, the efforts to that end not only of the Peruvian Government, but also of other countries, as well as the important work done by the Centre's Director, which includes vigorous fundraising efforts. In the sixth preambular paragraph, the General Assembly would welcome the decision of the Cuban Government to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco on the denuclearization of Latin America and the Caribbean. In the seventh preambular paragraph, the General Assembly would also welcome the creation of the South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation, which was declared by the Presidents of South America in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on 27 July 2002.

In the operative paragraphs, the General Assembly would, first, reiterate its strong support for the role of the Regional Centre. It would express its satisfaction and congratulate the Centre on the expansion of the vast range of activities carried out in the fields of peace, disarmament and development, while at the same time requesting it to take into account proposals to be submitted by countries in the region that are aimed at promoting confidence-building measures, arms control and limitation, transparency, disarmament and development at the regional level.

The General Assembly would also express its appreciation for the political support granted and the financial contributions made to the Regional Centre, which are essential for its continued operation. It would recognize the important role of the Centre in the promotion of regional initiatives agreed upon by Latin American and Caribbean countries in the fields of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, as well as with regard to the relationship between disarmament and development.

The draft resolution would also have the General Assembly appeal to regional Member States, international, governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations either to make or to increase their voluntary contributions so as to strengthen the Regional Centre and thus facilitate the implementation of its programme of activities. Finally, it would request the Secretary-General to provide the Centre with all necessary support, within existing resources, so that it may carry out its programme of activities in accordance with its mandate.

This draft resolution has been the object of consultations among interested delegations, and we are confident that, like similar texts in the past, it will receive the support of the General Assembly.

Mr. Flores (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have requested to speak on the draft resolution on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (A/C.1/57/L.16), as just introduced by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of all the countries of the region. The draft resolution is the result of consensus among all Latin American and Caribbean delegations and represents a joint endeavour that shows the growing interest of all countries in the work done by the Regional Centre.

The representative of Trinidad and Tobago has very clearly explained the most important aspects of the draft resolution. Therefore, as the representative of the Centre's host country, I should like to brief the Committee on only a few of the most prominent activities that the Centre has carried out this year. It is very significant that the Secretary-General appointed the Director of the Centre as Executive Secretary of the Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. That appointment shows the utility of the Centre and its credibility, not only among Member States but also in the eyes of the Organization itself.

The Regional Centre has formulated an important weapons destruction project that seeks to support Member States in implementing the 1997 Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing

of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Centre has worked with the Government of Argentina to destroy more than 2,000 firearms in the Mendoza region, where there were two stockpiles of weapons and ammunition. At the same time, it is cooperating in the destruction of 10,000 firearms in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. There are plans to destroy more than 30,000 firearms and approximately 100,000 rounds of ammunition in Argentina, Paraguay and Peru this year.

On 5 October in Madrid, the Centre, in cooperation with the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation, served as a platform for the creation of the first Permanent Forum of Parliamentarians committed to implementing the Programme of Action. The Forum is composed of parliamentarians from Central America and was supported by the Parliaments of Spain and Sweden. The Forum's purpose is to facilitate reform of national firearms legislation and to urge Governments to sign and implement international agreements.

We believe that the Centre has a very important role to play in the context of the new disarmament initiatives in the region and that it must continue to be supported through the provision of advice and assistance. We hope that this draft resolution, coordinated by my country and submitted by the representatives of all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, will be adopted by consensus, as has been customary with similar texts.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): On 14 October 2002, the Chinese State Council promulgated the regulations of the People's Republic of China on export control of dual-use biological agents and related equipment and technologies, which clearly set out Chinese export control measures with respect to dual-use biological agents and related equipment and technologies. China has always advocated the total prohibition and destruction of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction, including biological weapons. As a State party to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), China has always earnestly fulfilled its obligations. China has never developed, produced or stockpiled biological weapons and has never helped any other country to acquire or to develop such weapons. China has always opposed the proliferation of biological weapons and has taken a comprehensive set of strict export control measures.

The newly published regulations on the export control of dual-use biological agents and related equipment and technologies were formulated in consideration of the domestic and international situations and were based on domestic practices and the experiences of other countries in the area of export control. As one of the significant measures that China has undertaken to improve its export control of sensitive items, the regulations will further improve China's export control of dual-use biological agents and related equipment and technologies.

In accordance with the provisions of the BWC, States parties are obligated to promote international exchanges and cooperative activities for peaceful purposes in the biological field. China attaches importance to such activities and will continue them. The Chinese Government formulated its regulations to respond to international developments and to the need to enhance the rule of law in China, and also to regulate exchange and cooperative activities between China and other countries in the biological field.

When they enter into force, the regulations — along with existing regulations related to export control — will establish a comprehensive non-proliferation and export control system covering all sensitive items in the nuclear, biological, chemical and missile fields. That will further improve the legal framework for export control and will thus have a significant bearing on China's ability to fulfil its international non-proliferation obligations and on the normal development of its foreign trade and economic activities.

Mr. Baeidi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): My statement will focus on regional disarmament and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones has been widely recognized as an important and decisive way to promote nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. In fact, nuclear-weapon-free zones have become necessary complementary steps towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. Unfortunately, despite the strong call by the international community, a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East has yet to be established. No practical step has been taken to respond to the demand of 29 years of relevant General Assembly resolutions or to the urgent call that review

conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have made since 1995.

The establishment of a region free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East has now been facilitated by the accession to the NPT of all parties in the region except Israel. Israel is the only party in the region that continues, in defiance of the international community, to challenge the fundamental principles of the non-proliferation regime and that consequently declines to join the NPT. Israel, which suffers from its illegitimacy in the region, has chosen a policy of terror, intimidation and expansion. Therefore, Israel is pursuing an active programme of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, which has subjected the entire region to insecurity and volatile tension. Israel is operating a clandestine nuclear weapons programme at the Dimona site, which has lacked safeguards since its establishment. In fact, Israel has refused to allow any inspectors — even inspectors from its allied countries — to enter the site.

What is more important, Israel, through its policy of rejecting multilateral disarmament agreements, has created a situation in which States in the region are insecure about acceding to international treaties on weapons of mass destruction. My country, as an original State party to the NPT, to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), is extremely concerned at this menacing situation. Ultimately, Israel, in trying to justify its universally unacceptable policy, has continuously directed false and unverified accusations against other countries in the region.

The situation in the region is hectic and only a clear policy of all parties in the region to adhere to multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament agreements, along with sincere efforts to make the region free from weapons of mass destruction, can save lives and create peace and security. We should therefore spare no effort in consolidating our stance to further promote this objective.

Three basic steps need to be taken in this context. Israel should first accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency. To that end, as the second step, the developed States should particularly refrain from transferring or exporting relevant materials, equipment and technology to Israel, which has not committed itself to the non-proliferation and disarmament cause. Thirdly, all other parties to the NPT in the reg should comply and continue to comply with t obligations under the Treaty.

The reiteration in this year's draft resolution which is expected to be adopted by consensus — of long-standing principled position of the internati community with regard to the establishment o nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East an region free from weapons of mass destruction is another occasion for a manifestation of determination of the General Assembly to further important initiative.

The Chairman: I call on the representative Poland to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.48.

Mr. Jakubowski (Poland): As this is the time I am taking the floor in this Committee, allow first to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to high office. I would like to assure you of the suppo my delegation and my best congratulations also g the members of your Bureau.

It is my pleasure to present to the Committee, on behalf of Canada and Poland, the d resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L entitled "Implementation of the Convention on Prohibition of the Development, Product Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and Their Destruction".

As in previous years, this draft resolution's is to strengthen the role of and further mobilize sup for the Chemical Weapons Convention, which is best delivery vehicle on the road towards a world of these abhorrent weapons. The Convention, w entered into force more than five years ago, se purposes of fundamental importance. This import is growing, nowadays in particular. Since its entry force, for the States parties the prohibition of chem weapons and warfare, the obligation to des chemical weapons under strict internati verification and the destruction of production facil within a specific time have become legal obligati The States parties must also be fully open to Convention's verification regime in order to ensure non-proliferation of chemical weapons.

We can and should be satisfied with the prog that has been made over the past five years in mee the Convention's objectives. Verification proced and provisions have proved effective. A signifi

amount of chemical weapons stockpiles has been destroyed. Our world is definitely safer.

The pivotal role in this process has been played by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) through the processing of national declarations, the conduct of on-site inspections or the provision of technical assistance to States parties in fulfilling their obligations. It is reassuring and satisfying to see the OPCW move towards higher levels of excellence in performing its duties.

Much work, indeed, has been done, but much remains to be done towards achieving the ultimate purpose of the Convention. The States parties have invested a great deal in the process of the Convention's implementation. They do their best at many levels — at the meetings of the States parties in The Hague or in their cooperation with OPCW. To cite just the latest example, the first OPCW international assistance and delivery exercise was held in September in Croatia, in accordance with article X of the Convention.

Nevertheless, we all know that not all objectives and purposes of the Chemical Weapons Convention have been fully met. Moreover, in addition to old, well-known facts, a new one has appeared: the threat of chemical terrorism. The international community must ensure that chemical weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorists. Thus, it is more than evident that the importance of the Convention is growing. Also growing are the importance of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and OPCW in the framework of the Relationship Agreement.

In view of all this, the universalization of the Convention remains of the highest priority. It would certainly help to stop each and every entity from violating the Convention. The further enlargement of the group of States parties is key to the full implementation of the Convention. As I speak, 146 States are parties to the Convention, but, as all representatives certainly know, Samoa deposited its instruments of ratification of the Convention with the Secretary-General on 27 September. Accordingly, Samoa will become the 147th State party to the Convention on 27 October 2002, before the General Assembly takes action on this draft resolution. We also hope that the first Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, to be held at The Hague in 2003, will generate a new impetus in efforts towards the universalization and full implementation of all provisions of the Convention.

In dealing with this draft resolution, Canada and Poland have once again decided to follow a long-standing strategy and not to invite additional co-sponsors. We are very grateful to all delegations for their support of and dedication to the cause of the Convention, as well as for their understanding of our position.

In conclusion, on behalf of Canada and Poland, I express our hope that the draft resolution may once again be adopted without a vote as a manifestation of the international community's commitment to totally banning and eliminating these abhorrent weapons.

Ms. Higgins (Canada): The Canadian delegation referred earlier this week to the uniquely horrific characteristics of nuclear weapons. But other weapons of mass destruction — chemical and biological — are also abhorrent and repugnant, to quote the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. We need to get rid of all of them. To that end, we must reinforce the norms and fulfil the Conventions we have built against them.

Canada is pleased to co-sponsor, together with Poland, a draft resolution reaffirming the importance of the Chemical Weapons Convention and of achieving its universality and its full implementation. This still relatively young international instrument, with an impressive number of States parties — close to 150 in such a short time — has already demonstrated its value in our collective fight against this scourge. This year, with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons embarking on a new era and with States parties preparing for the Convention's first review conference, it is important that the First Committee and the General Assembly send a message of strong endorsement.

Biological weapons are among the most fearsome weapons of mass destruction. Canada, like so many others, is determined to strengthen and use our conventions to eliminate them. We are pleased that the 1925 Geneva Protocol is now viewed as a component of international humanitarian law. We urge all those who maintain reservations to remove them. We want the Review Conference next month to focus on practical cooperation, building on the commitments

and confidence-building measures that are already in place. Any less would surely betray our Governments' responsibility and confound our peoples' expectations of effective cooperative action.

Also on our agenda is outer space. Canada's position is well known. It was expressed in our general statement. We are committed to preventing the weaponization of outer space. We fear a "tragedy of the commons", and we believe that a multilateral instrument is required. We welcome the draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space," and look forward to its adoption.

Mr. Mourao (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): The countries of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated countries Bolivia and Chile, on whose behalf it is my honour to speak, wish to reiterate our commitment to peace, security and cooperation, as we stated at Ushuaia, Argentine Republic, in July 1998. Ours is a region where peaceful coexistence has been the norm and where dialogue and peaceful options for conflict settlement have prevailed. Taking cooperative action on peace and security is vital to maintaining the pace of progress in economic, social and political integration among our countries. Constant dialogue has been fundamental to creating a climate of transparency and trust in order to maintain peace and friendship among our peoples at a time when democratic institutions have been put to the test as a consequence of the economic crisis afflicting many countries of our region. Likewise, our commitment to peace and security is reflected in the many subregional and bilateral experiences of cooperation and confidence building, including the activities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), through Argentina and Chile's work on common standardized methodology to measure the defence expenditures of the two countries.

Our contributions to building a climate of security in the hemisphere go well beyond the military aspect. The military institutions, consistent with the aspirations of civil society, have a role to play in building a peaceful, united continent that participates actively in the international system. I wish to express, on behalf of the countries and associated countries of MERCOSUR, our pleasure at the convening in Miami on 9 and 10 December of the Meeting of Experts on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in the region, mandated by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States. The meeting will follow up on regional conferences on confidence- and security-building measures, held in Santiago and El Salvador, in order to evaluate their implementation and consider the next step to strengthen mutual confidence, as urged by the heads of State or Government in the Plan of Action adopted at the third Summit of the Americas, held in Quebec City.

Mr. Alkubaisi (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like first of all to express my condolences to the families and Governments of the innocent victims of the terrorist attack in Bali and to the friendly Government and people of Indonesia. We condemn that attack irrespective of its source and objective. In the face of the new challenges confronting the international community, especially international terrorism, it is necessary to respond collectively. The problem of disarmament and international security must take on new dimensions and lead to a firm collective commitment and to a new security approach. We must mobilize all our efforts to resolve questions related to disarmament and other relevant issues.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.27 refers to a resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That Conference paid special attention to the Middle East, adopting a separate resolution on it, calling on countries that have not yet acceded to the Treaty, without exception, to do so without delay and to adopt the safeguards regime. The same resolution called upon the States of the region to take effective and practical measures to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In 1974, the General Assembly first adopted a resolution regarding the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Another such resolution was adopted in 1980 by consensus. All Arab countries have acceded to the Treaty, as is mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, document A/53/379. But Israel, to date, has not acceded to the Treaty, and there has been no progress in that regard. Its nuclear installations have not been subjected to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The State of Qatar has reiterated in international forums its sincere wish to make the Middle East a region free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass

destruction. Most recently, a statement was made by the Qatari Minister for Foreign Affairs before the General Assembly on 17 September 2002, in which he said:

> "We in the Middle East are threatened by a clear imbalance of power. Israel is the only country in the region that possesses an arsenal of nuclear weapons and refuses to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We appeal to all peace-loving countries to demand that Israel accede to the Treaty and submit its nuclear installations to the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency." (*A/57/PV.12, p. 29*)

The report of the Secretary-General entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" (A/57/454) notes that the General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of resolution 56/27, reaffirmed the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and placement of all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East.

The Secretary-General also referred to resolution GC(46)RES/16 of the IAEA conference entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East", which emphasized the urgent need for the resolution adopted on 20 September 2002 to be accepted by all countries of the Middle East, and also the need for the early application of IAEA safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region as a confidence-building measure among the countries of the region. Peace and security must also be strengthened in order to create a region that is free of nuclear weapons.

The General Conference of the IAEA adopts a similar resolution every year, emphasizing the importance of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapon in helping to create a region that is completely free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and the need to strengthen peace and security there.

In conclusion, if we wish to make the Middle East a region free of weapons of mass destruction, this resolution is extremely vital and important and has positive implications for the countries of the region. The maintenance of peace depends on moral respect for agreements concluded among various parties. Israel must therefore destroy its nuclear arsenals, which would help bring about a just and lasting peace in the region. We in the State of Qatar aspire to a better future and wish to live in a region that is free of weapons of mass destruction, so that the peoples of the Middle East can promote their interests and build their societies, raise their economic standards and live in peace.

Mr. Oyugi (Kenya): My delegation is taking the floor to express its support for draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.33, entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", which was introduced yesterday by Japan.

On 11 October 2002, the Security Council held a public debate on small arms. The large number of speakers, including Kenya, was a reflection of the importance attached to the matter. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2002/1053) on the item underscored the fact that the spread of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons posed a global threat to security and human rights. Preventing, combating and eliminating the uncontrolled spread of these weapons poses a challenge to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July 2001, provided a solid basis for action at the national, regional and global levels, while recognizing that the primary responsibility for dealing with the problem lies with the States themselves. Indeed, the Programme of Action adopted at that Conference enumerated the steps ahead, including international cooperation and assistance.

Since then, a number of measures have been taken by the United Nations, through the Department for Disarmament Affairs, by the States themselves, both single and in concert with others, and through the involvement of civil society and non-governmental organizations.

Two key issues were touched on during the Conference, namely the supply of arms to private individuals and to non-State actors. As my delegation urged during the earlier general debate, it is hoped that we can seize the opportunity offered by the first biennial meeting next year to further exchange views on those two issues, as they have a direct bearing on the security of private citizens and of States and on international peace and security.

Recent news of an individual roaming certain cities and taking potshots at innocent citizens, killing a

few, has demonstrated the dangers, to which we referred last year, related to the uncontrolled possession of arms.

In furtherance of the implementation of the Programme of Action, South Africa, together with Austria, Canada, Kenya, Mali, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom co-hosted the African Conference on the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms: Needs and Partnerships, held from 18 to 21 March 2002 in Pretoria. The Conference, among other things, looked at cooperation between African and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in this domain.

On 7 and 8 August 2002, States parties to the Nairobi Declaration on Small Arms held the first Ministerial Review Conference in Nairobi. The Conference brought together minister of foreign affairs from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, the Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. The ministers agreed to establish and operationalize national focal points by the end of 2002 and to develop national action plans to combat the menace of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Finally, bearing in mind the fact that no region in the world has been more affected by the spread of these weapons than the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa, my delegation calls on all States to support the draft resolution on small arms and light weapons, as elaborated in document A/C.1/57/L.33.

Mr. Sood (India): I have asked for the floor in order to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament", contained in document A/C.1/57/L.50, under agenda item 62, which has been co-sponsored by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, the Congo, Cuba, the draft resolution, Fiji, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Madagascar, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Viet Nam and Zambia.

India has, since 1989, brought forward before this Committee, along with our co-sponsors, this particular draft resolution, because we consider it an issue of fundamental importance to the international community in general and to the developing world in particular. The progress achieved in the area of science and technology, especially recent momentous advances, offer us immense possibilities for development.

However, there is a need to recognize that several of these advances could have military applications, making them dual-use in character. This year, the draft resolution reiterates that access to scientific and technological developments is unquestionably a crucial prerequisite for developing countries and for their progress towards economic growth and to enable them actively to participate in global trade.

However, because many of these countries are denied access to such technologies, in view of discriminatory control regimes formulated in exclusive groupings that limit exchanges of such technologies among themselves and deny others access, even though these may be required for peaceful development purposes. Such regimes often act as non-economic barriers to normal trade and go against the principles of global equitable economic relations.

It must be recognized that such exclusive export-control policies were initiated to address proliferation concerns at a time when we did not have global agreements in this regard. Questions have since arisen as to whether such exclusive arrangements have really been effective in achieving their stated purpose of strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, especially in the context of scientific and technological applications related to advanced weapons or weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The Chemical Weapons Convention offers an opportunity to put in place a multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory legal mechanism that simultaneously addresses proliferation concerns emanating from unregulated transfers while promoting the economic development of States parties. This Convention has placed an obligation on States parties to review their existing national regulations in the field of trade in chemicals in order to ensure that these are consistent with the objectives of the Convention.

However, the persistence of certain ad hoc export-control regimes creating two categories of States parties reminds us of the need for the early implementation of all of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, in order to safeguard its long-term viability.

The setback in negotiations for an effective protocol that could have strengthened the effectiveness and implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) has, unfortunately, prevented the realization of an effective system of regulations and of transfer of agents, toxins, equipment and technologies relevant to the BWC.

The lack of a genuinely non-discriminatory universal agreement regarding nuclear weapons has also reduced the effectiveness of efforts to achieve non-proliferation in the nuclear field. Nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects includes the need for measures that would promote nuclear disarmament and the progressive elimination of nuclear weapons. The absence of such a benchmark makes it difficult to achieve genuine nuclear non-proliferation.

India has been consistent in its stand that proliferation concerns regarding materials and technologies relating to advanced weapons systems and weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory agreements which are transparent and open to universal participation. The reflection of this principle in multilateral disarmament agreements would improve their effectiveness and also create an added impetus for their universality.

What is needed today is an effective and transparent system of export control of technologies in line with non-proliferation objectives in all their aspects, without affecting the peaceful application of these technologies. India, along with the co-sponsors of the draft resolution, hopes that the draft will receive wide support in the Committee, and we therefore recommend the draft resolution for adoption by all members.

I would like also to take this opportunity to introduce another draft resolution, A/C.1/57/L.52, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", under agenda item 66 (h), sponsored by Bhutan, Cuba, Haiti, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Namibia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, the Sudan and Zambia.

We believe that, with the end of the cold war, there remains no justification for thousands of nuclear weapons to be maintained in a state of hair-trigger alert. This state of high alert of these nuclear weapons poses the risk of accidental launch in response to a false warning or wrong communication and the hazard of their falling into the wrong hands. We must prevent the irreversible consequences of such a dangerous eventuality.

We took the initiative of introducing this draft resolution in 1998, and every year it has received widespread support. The draft resolution, in its modest and practical approach, calls for a review of nuclear doctrines and for immediate steps to be taken to reduce the risk of the unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons.

There may well be apprehensions about the complicated nature of the technicalities involved. However, we believe that these can be overcome if there is the political will to do so. Undoubtedly, the elimination of nuclear weapons would require protracted negotiations, but this should not deter us from taking interim steps to reduce the immediate danger that these nuclear weapons pose, especially now that the global security scenario includes a grave threat from terrorists.

The imperative and urgent need to reduce the serious risk associated with unintentional, accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons has already been endorsed for many years now by the member States of the Conference on Disarmament, various Governments around the world and non-governmental organizations. The Canberra Commission, the Pugwash Foundation and the Tokyo Forum are just some of the organizations that have issued detailed reports on this threat.

In March 2000, the Secretary-General proposed the convening of a major international conference that would help to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers in order to help focus attention on the risks posed by the hair-trigger alert of thousands of deployed nuclear weapons. A consensus Declaration adopted at the United Nations Millennium Summit on 8 September 2000 also resolved to convene an international conference towards that objective.

The Secretary-General's report, submitted in 2002, in keeping with resolution 56/24 C, encourages Member States to continue their endeavours to create conditions that would allow the emergence of an international consensus to hold such a conference. The Secretary-General has also pledged that the United Nations will continue to fulfil its mandate in contributing to the reduction of nuclear danger by advocating nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the promotion of dialogue on proposals and new ideas

in this context, as well as support for disarmament and non-proliferation education and information.

For these reasons, we would propose to request the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts and to provide support to such initiatives that can contribute to the full implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (A/56/400), and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

The recommendations contained in the report are pragmatic and feasible. We have endeavoured, through our draft resolution, to garner the support of all States, which is necessary to ensure the safety and security of humankind in a world free from the danger of accidental launch, false alarms and the dangers posed by weapons deployed at hair-trigger alert.

It is a simple draft resolution, and we urge all delegations to support its implementation, because we believe that, with the adoption of such a draft resolution and the necessary political will for its implementation, we will take another significant step towards reducing nuclear danger.

Mr. Erendo (Mongolia): Mr. Chairman, since I am taking the floor for the first time in this Committee, may I congratulate you on your well-deserved election. My congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau. I join previous speakers in expressing condolences to the delegations of Indonesia, the Philippines and the other countries whose citizens fell victim to the wanton act of terrorism in Bali. That incident is a fresh reminder of the dangers that terrorism poses to peace and security. It constitutes yet another urgent call for concerted and collective efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.21, entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status". During the general debate, my delegation dwelt extensively on the activities undertaken to implement the provisions of resolution 55/33 S by my Government, as well as by the United Nations and by Member States. A very good update on the process is contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/57/159).

I would simply emphasize that this draft resolution is essentially a procedural one. It takes note of the report of the Secretary-General and expresses appreciation to him for the efforts to implement resolution 55/33 S. Like the previous resolution, it endorses and supports Mongolia's good-neighbourly relations with its neighbours, and it invites Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia on the implementation of its provisions.

The draft resolution that I am introducing today, although a procedural one, has been the subject of very careful examination by interested delegations. Thus, it enjoys wide support. My delegation, therefore, hopes that the Committee will agree, as before, to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

Mr. Tajouri (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to extend our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia, and to the families of the victims of the recent criminal act that took place in Bali. We strongly condemn such acts.

In this connection, I would like to touch on two topics. First, my delegation supports draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.28, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East". The draft resolution was introduced by the delegation of sisterly Egypt. We understand the need to establish such zones, since their main objective is to serve international peace and security. My country firmly believes in the need to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. We also believe in the need to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya emphasizes that, as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), it has signed the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty — the Pelindaba Treaty.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has stressed the need to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. However, the Israelis' refusal to accede to the NPT or to place their nuclear installations under the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has impeded the fulfilment of this collective demand, which has been voiced in many United Nations resolutions, including the resolutions adopted in the outcome documents of the Fifth and Sixth Review Conferences of the Parties to the NPT, held respectively in 1995 and 2000.

In order to achieve international peace and security, my country calls upon the international community to ensure the implementation of those resolutions, by the Israelis in particular. The

international community must bring more pressure to bear on the Israelis to comply with the international will, accede to the NPT and place their nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA. They should also agree to a specific time frame, according to which Israeli weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, will be destroyed.

Secondly, we extend our warmest thanks to Ambassador Tibor Toth of Hungary, for his introduction of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.22 on the Biological Weapons Convention. We thank him also for his explanation of the dangers stemming from violations of this Convention and of what Member States should do to strengthen the Convention. As a party to the Convention, my country has actively participated in meetings related to strengthening the Convention. We also see a need to describe the circumstances in which the Convention was developed, while strengthening it with a view to agreeing on a standard approach to promoting its goals. In order to achieve this, an ad hoc open-ended working group was established under the Convention in 1994; it is designed to conclude a legally binding instrument to strengthen the Convention. The group has held 24 meetings over seven years. Regrettably, it could not continue its work; it failed to agree to a final draft report to be presented to the Fifth Review Conference. This is due to the stand taken by one State that opposed the continuation of the working group's work. In addition, the Fifth Review Conference, held in Geneva last year, was also unable to issue a final declaration, because one State proposed the termination of the work of the ad hoc working group, despite the fact that the majority opposed this. The Conference was therefore suspended and will resume at the end of this year.

My country categorically rejects the imposition of a unilateral policy as we work to strengthen the Convention. The best means to achieve that goal is to let the ad hoc working group complete its work and prepare a legally binding instrument through multilateral negotiations. All States that have not yet done so should speedily accede to the Convention so that it will be truly universal.

The Acting Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Hajihosseini (Organization of the Islamic Conference): Since this is my first time addressing the Committee at this session, allow me to extend our sincere congratulations to the Chairman and, through him, to the other members of the Bureau on their election to their high offices. We are confident that the proceedings of this Committee will be successfully steered under his able and wise leadership. I also wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on agenda item 63, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", contained in documents A/57/214, A/57/214/Add.1 and A/57/214/Add.2.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) keenly observes and participates in the deliberations of the First Committee, which addresses issues of concern to its member States, all of whom are also States Members of the United Nations. We shall be following those issues with much interest.

Among them are the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. Having recognized the fact that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an effective means to prevent nuclear proliferation and should contribute towards nuclear disarmament and lead to the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament, the Organization of the Islamic Conference has had this issue on its agenda since 1976.

Since then, progress has been made on establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa following the successful conclusion of the 1996 signing ceremony in Egypt of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. Our organization welcomed and has supported that positive development. And the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, at its twenty-ninth session, held in Khartoum, Sudan, in June 2002, has joined the international community in welcoming the recent agreement to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia as a very important step in the disarmament process.

As for the region of the Middle East, it is regrettable that Israel remains an obstacle — in fact the only obstacle — to achieving the goal of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. In that regard, the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, at the session to which I referred, has adopted a resolution urging all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to

exert pressure on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It also called on the international community, and the Security Council in particular, to compel Israel to comply with the relevant resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 487 (1981), and to immediately implement the resolutions of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) calling for the submission of all Israeli atomic facilities to the IAEA comprehensive safeguard system. I should add that the resolution also requested all Member States of the OIC to maintain and further coordinate their positions at the United Nations and other relevant international forums to promote the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Let me conclude by referring to the Chairman's statement of 30 September 2002 to this Committee.

> "Our goals must be to continue the process of strengthening global norms to eliminate the deadliest weapons the world has ever known, promoting controls over other weapons that threaten international peace and security, and exploring measures to advance conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of disputes." (*A/C.1/57/PV.2, p. 11*)

It is our ardent hope that the international community will collectively work towards the achievement of those noble goals so that peace and security will prevail.

The Acting Chairman: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that the following Member States have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: A/C.1/57/L.4, China, Cyprus, Luxembourg and South Africa; A/C.1/57/L.5, Armenia; A/C.1/57/L.25, Cyprus, Japan and Uganda; A/C.1/57/L.30, Uganda; A/C.1/57/L.31, Albania; A/C.1/57/L.32, Egypt; A/C.1/57/L.33, Cape Verde, Estonia, Madagascar and Uganda; A/C.1/57/L.34, Tuvalu; A/C.1/57/L.35, Fiji, Kyrgyzstan, Micronesia, New Zealand and Samoa; A/C.1/57/L.36, Sierra Leone; A/C.1/57/L.38, Poland, Uganda and Yemen; A/C.1/57/L.43, Uganda; A/C.1/57/44, Cyprus; A/C.1/57/45, Uganda; A/C.1/57/46, Sierra Leone; A/C.1/57/L.51 and A/C.1/57/L.52, Cambodia; and A/C.1/57/L.53, Sierra Leone and Yemen.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.